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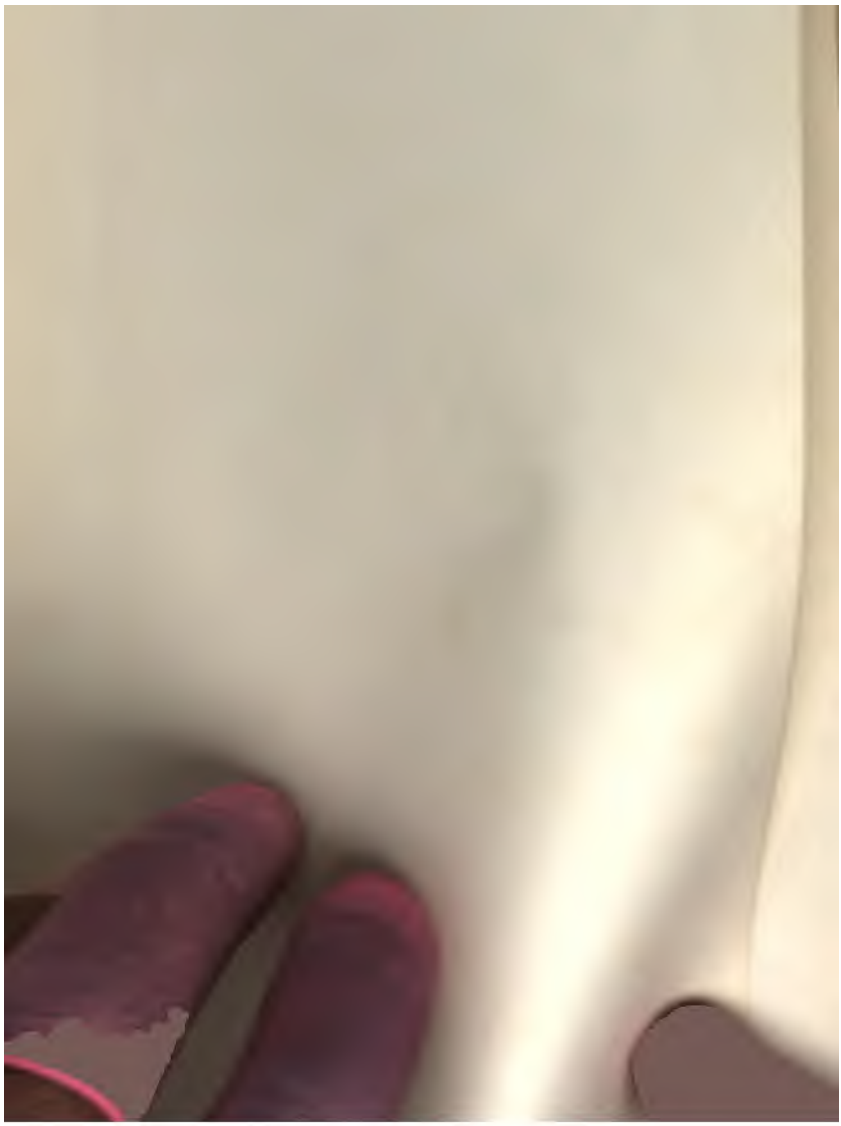

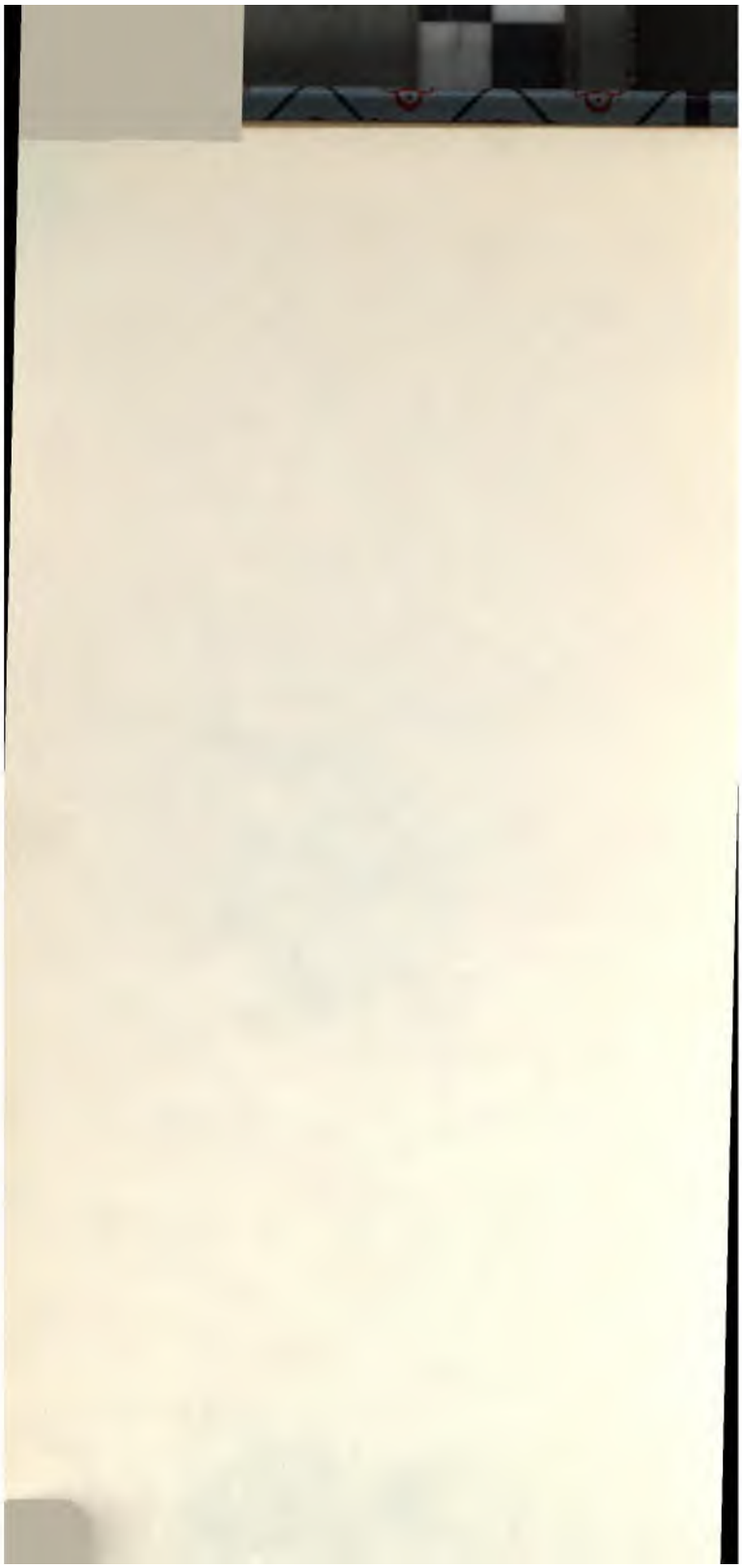

The English Dramatists

THOMAS MIDDLETON

VOLUME THE FIFTH

THE WORKS

OF

THOMAS MIDDLETON

EDITED BY

A. H. BULLEN, B.A.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES

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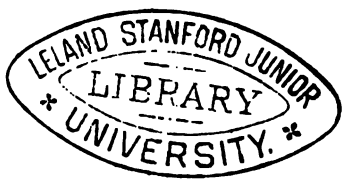

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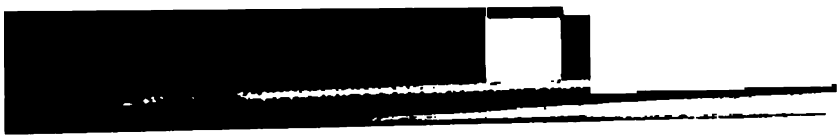
Three hundred and fifty copies of this Edition have been printed and the type distributed. *No more will be published.*

A CHASTE MAID IN CHEAPSIDE.



A CHASTE MAID IN CHEAPSIDE.

A Chast Mayd in Cheape-side. A Pleasant conceited Comedy neuer before printed. As it hath beene often acted at the Swan on the Banke-side, by the Lady Elizabeth her Seruants. By Thomas Middelton Gent. London, Printed for Francis Constable dwelling at the signe of the Crane in Pauls Church-yard. 1630. 4to.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR WALTER WHOREHOUND.
SIR OLIVER KIX.
TOUCHWOOD *senior.*
TOUCHWOOD *junior.*
ALLWIT.
YELLOWHAMMER, *a goldsmith.*
TIM, *his son.*
Tutor to Tim.
DAVY DAHANNA,[1] *Sir Walter's poor kinsman and attendant.*
Parson.
WAT, NICK, } *sons to Sir Walter by Mistress Allwit.*
Two Promoters.
Porter, Watermen, &c.

LADY KIX.
MISTRESS TOUCHWOOD, *wife to* TOUCHWOOD *senior.*
MISTRESS ALLWIT.
MAUDLIN, *wife to* YELLOWHAMMER.
MOLL, *her daughter.*
Welshwoman, mistress to SIR W. WHOREHOUND.
Country Girl.
SUSAN, *Maid, Midwife, Nurses, Puritans and other Gossips, &c.*

SCENE, LONDON.

---

[1] Here, and occasionally in the text, old ed. gives "Dahumma."

A CHASTE MAID IN CHEAPSIDE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

YELLOWHAMMER'S *Shop.*

Enter MAUDLIN *and* MOLL.

Maud. Have you played over all your old lessons o' the virginals?[1]

Moll. Yes.

Maud. Yes? you are a dull maid a' late; methinks you had need have somewhat to quicken your green sickness—do you weep?—a husband: had not such a piece of flesh been ordained, what had us wives been good for? to make salads, or else cried up and down for samphire.[2] To see the difference of these seasons! when

---

[1] A musical instrument resembling a spinnet.

[2] Among the street-cries enumerated in the first of the two songs printed at the end of Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece* we find:—

> " 'I ha' *rock-samphire*, I ha' rock-samphire!'
> Thus go the cries in Rome's fair town:
> First they go up street, and then they go down."

I was of your youth, I was lightsome and quick two years before I was married. You fit for a knight's bed! drowsy-browed, dull-eyed, drossy-spirited! I hold my life you have forgot your dancing: when was the dancer with you?

Moll. The last week.

Maud. Last week? when I was of your bord[1]
He miss'd me not a night; I was kept at it;
I took delight to learn, and he to teach me;
Pretty brown gentleman! he took pleasure in my company:
But you are dull, nothing comes nimbly from you;
You dance like a plumber's daughter, and deserve
Two thousand pound in lead to your marriage,
And not in goldsmith's ware.

Enter YELLOWHAMMER.

Yel. Now, what's the din
Betwixt mother and daughter, ha?

Maud. Faith, small;
Telling your daughter, Mary, of her errors.

Yel. Errors? nay, the city cannot hold you, wife,
But you must needs fetch words from Westminster:
I ha' done, i'faith.
Has no attorney's clerk been here a' late,

[1] So the old ed.—Dyce reads "board," which gives no sense. "Bord" is a corruption of "bore" (the calibre of a gun), which is used metaphorically in the sense of *capacity, quality*. We have the form *bord* in the *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, iii. 2:—"He plants a brazen piece of mighty *bord*."

And chang'd his half-crown-piece his mother sent him,
Or rather cozen'd you with a gilded twopence,
To bring the word in fashion for her faults
Or cracks in duty and obedience?
Term 'em even so, sweet wife,
As there's no woman made without a flaw;
Your purest lawns have frays, and cambrics bracks.[1]
Maud. But 'tis a husband solders up all cracks.
Moll. What, is he come, sir?
Yel. Sir Walter's come: he was met
At Holborn Bridge, and in his company
A proper fair young gentlewoman, which I guess,
By her red hair and other rank descriptions,
To be his landed niece, brought out of Wales,
Which Tim our son, the Cambridge-boy, must marry:
'Tis a match of sir Walter's own making,
To bind us to him and our heirs for ever.
Maud. We're honour'd then, if this baggage would be humble,
And kiss him with devotion when he enters.
I cannot get her for my life
To instruct her hand thus, before and after,—
Which a knight will look for,—before and after:
I've told her still 'tis the waving of a woman
Does often move a man, and prevails strongly.
But, sweet, ha' you sent to Cambridge? has Tim word on't?
Yel. Had word just the day after, when you sent him

[1] Crack, flaw.—So in the epilogue to Fletcher's *Valentinian*:—

"Let not a *brack* i' the stuff, or here and there
The fading gloss, a general fault appear."

The silver spoon to eat his broth in the hall
Amongst the gentlemen-commoners.

Maud. O, 'twas timely.

Enter Porter.

Yel. How now?

Por. A letter from a gentleman in Cambridge.
[*Gives letter to* YELLOWHAMMER.

Yel. O, one of Hobson's[1] porters: thou art welcome.—
I told thee, Maud, we should hear from Tim. [*Reads.*] *Amantissimis carissimisque ambobus parentibus, patri et matri.* 61

Maud. What's the matter?

Yel. Nay, by my troth, I know not, ask not me:
He's grown too verbal; this learning's a great witch.

Maud. Pray, let me see it; I was wont to understand him. [*Reads.*] *Amantissimis carissimis*, he has sent the carrier's man, he says; *ambobus parentibus*, for a pair of boots; *patri et matri*, pay the porter, or it makes no matter. 69

Por. Yes, by my faith, mistress; there's no true construction in that: I have took a great deal of pains, and

---

[1] Hobson was the Cambridge carrier, "who sickened in the time of his vacancy, being forbid to go to London by reason of the plague." Milton has immortalised him in a couple of epitaphs. He died in January 1630-31. There are several epitaphs on him in *Wit's Recreations*. It is said that he never allowed his customers to select their horses, but let out the animals to hire in succession: hence the proverb *Hobson's Choice*.

come from the Bell[1] sweating. Let me come to't, for I was a scholar forty years ago; 'tis thus, I warrant you: [*Reads.*] *Matri*, it makes no matter; *ambobus parentibus*, for a pair of boots; *patri*, pay the porter; *amantissimis carissimis*, he's the carrier's man, and his name is Sims; and there he says true, forsooth, my name is Sims indeed; I have not forgot all my learning: a money-matter, I thought I should hit on't. 79

Yel. Go, thou'rt an old fox; there's a tester[2] for thee. [*Gives money.*

Por. If I see your worship at Goose-fair, I have a dish of birds for you.

Yel. Why, dost dwell at Bow?

Por. All my lifetime, sir; I could ever say bo to a goose. Farewell to your worship. [*Exit.*

Yel. A merry porter!

Maud. How can he choose but be so,
Coming with Cambridge-letters from our son Tim?

Yel. What's here? *maximus diligo;* faith, I must to my learned counsel with this gear,[3] 'twill ne'er be discerned else. 91

---

[1] "Qy. 'the Bull?'

'He is not dead, but left his mansion here,
Has left the *Bull*, and flitted to the Beare.'
First Epitaph on Hobson—Wit's Recr., p. 249.

'This memorable man [Hobson] stands drawn in fresco, at an inn, which he used in Bishopsgate-Street, with an hundred pound bag under his arm, with this inscription upon the said bag:

The fruitful mother of an hundred more.'
The Spectator, No. 509."—*Dyce.*

[2] Sixpence. [3] Bus'ness.

Maud. Go to my cousin then, at Inns-of-court.
Yel. Fie, they are all for French, they speak no Latin.
Maud. The parson then will do it.
Yel. Nay, he disclaims it,
Calls Latin papistry, he will not deal with it.—

Enter a Gentleman.

What is't you lack, gentleman?
Gent. Pray, weigh this chain.
[*Gives chain, which* YELLOWHAMMER *weighs.*

Enter Sir WALTER WHOREHOUND, Welshwoman, *and* DAVY.

Sir Wal. Now, wench, thou art welcome
To the heart of the city of London.
Welsh. Dugat a whee.
Sir Wal. You can thank me in English, if you list.
Welsh. I can, sir, simply.
Sir Wal. 'Twill serve to pass, wench; 100
'Twas strange that I should lie with thee so often,
To leave thee without English, that were unnatural.
I bring thee up to turn thee into gold, wench,
And make thy fortune shine like your bright trade;
A goldsmith's shop sets out a city maid.—
Davy Dahanna, not a word.
Davy. Mum, mum, sir.
Sir Wal. Here you must pass for a pure virgin.

Davy. Pure Welsh virgin!
She lost her maidenhead in Brecknockshire. [*Aside.*
Sir Wal. I hear you mumble, Davy.
Davy. I have teeth, sir;
I need not mumble yet this forty years.
Sir Wal. The knave bites plaguily!
Yel. What's your price, sir?
Gent. A hundred pound, sir.
Yel. A hundred marks the utmost;
'Tis not for me else.—What, Sir Walter Whorehound?
[*Exit* Gentleman.
Moll. O death! [*Exit.*
Maud. Why, daughter—Faith, the baggage [is]
A bashful girl, sir; these young things are shamefac'd;
Besides, you have a presence, sweet sir Walter,
Able to daunt a maid brought up i' the city:
A brave court-spirit makes our virgins quiver,
And kiss with trembling thighs; yet see, she comes, sir.

Re-enter MOLL.

Sir Wal. Why, how now, pretty mistress? now I've caught you:
What, can you injure so your time to stray
Thus from your faithful servant?
Yel. Pish, stop your words, good knight,—'twill make her blush else,—
Which wound[1] too high for the daughters of the freedom.
Honour and faithful servant! they are compliments

[1] The text is unsatisfactory.—Dyce suggests "sound."

For the worthies of Whitehall or Greenwich;
E'en plain, sufficient subsidy-words serves us, sir.
And is this gentlewoman your worthy niece?
Sir Wal. You may be bold with her on these terms, 'tis she, sir,
Heir to some nineteen mountains.
Yel. Bless us all!
You overwhelm me, sir, with love and riches.
Sir Wal. And all as high as Paul's.
Davy. Here's work, i'faith! [*Aside.*
Sir Wal. How sayst thou, Davy?
Davy. Higher, sir, by far;
You cannot see the top of 'em.
Yel. What, man!—
Maudlin, salute this gentlewoman, our daughter,
If things hit right.

Enter TOUCHWOOD *junior.*

Touch. jun. My knight, with a brace of footmen,
Is come, and brought up his ewe-mutton to find
A ram at London; I must hasten it,
Or else pick[1] a' famine; her blood is mine,
And that's the surest. Well, knight, that choice spoil
Is only kept for me. [*Aside.*
Moll. Sir——
Touch. jun. Turn not to me till thou mayst lawfully; it but whets my stomach, which is too sharp-set already. Read that note carefully [*giving letter to* MOLL]; keep

[1] Peak, dwindle.

me from suspicion still, nor know my zeal but in thy heart:
Read, and send but thy liking in three words;
I'll be at hand to take it.
Yel. O turn, sir, turn.
A[1] poor, plain boy, an university man;
Proceeds next Lent to a bachelor of art;
He will be call'd sir Yellowhammer then
Over all Cambridge, and that's half a knight.
Maud. Please you, draw near
And taste the welcome of the city, sir.
Yel. Come, good sir Walter, and your virtuous niece here.
Sir Wal. 'Tis manners to take kindness.
Yel. Lead 'em in, wife.
Sir Wal. Your company, sir?
Yel. I'll give't you instantly.
[*Exeunt* MAUDLIN, Sir W. WHOREHOUND, *Welshwoman, and* DAVY.
Touch. jun. How strangely busy is the devil and riches!
Poor soul! kept in too hard, her mother's eye
Is cruel toward her, being to him.
'Twere a good mirth now to set him a-work
To make her wedding-ring; I must about it:
Rather than the gain should fall to a stranger,
'Twas honesty in me t' enrich my father. [*Aside.*
Yel. The girl is wondrous peevish. I fear nothing

[1] Before these lines something appears to have dropped out.

But that she's taken with some other love,
Then all's quite dash'd: that must be narrowly look'd to;
We cannot be too wary in our children.— [*Aside.*
What is't you lack?
Touch. jun. O, nothing now; all that I wish is present:
I'd have a wedding-ring made for a gentlewoman
With all speed that may be.
Yel. Of what weight, sir?
Touch. jun. Of some half ounce, stand fair
And comely, with the spark of a diamond;
Sir, 'twere pity to lose the least grace.
Yel. Pray, let's see it.
[*Takes stone from* TOUCHWOOD *junior.*
Indeed, sir, 'tis a pure one.
Touch. jun. So is the mistress.
Yel. Have you the wideness of her finger, sir?
Touch. jun. Yes, sure, I think I have her measure about me:
Good faith, 'tis down, I cannot show it you;
I must pull too many things out to be certain.
Let me see—long and slender, and neatly jointed;
Just such another gentlewoman—that's your daughter, sir?
Yel. And therefore, sir, no gentlewoman.
Touch. jun. I protest
I ne'er saw two maids handed more alike;
I'll ne'er seek farther, if you'll give me leave, sir.
Yel. If you dare venture by her finger, sir.

Touch. jun. Ay, and I'll bide all loss, sir.
Yel. Say you so, sir?
Let us see.—Hither, girl.
Touch. jun. Shall I make bold
With your finger, gentlewoman?
Moll. Your pleasure, sir.
Touch. jun. That fits her to a hair, sir.
[*Trying ring on* MOLL'S *finger.*
Yel. What's your posy now, sir?
Touch. jun. Mass, that's true: posy? i'faith, e'en thus, sir:
Love that's wise
Blinds parents' eyes.
Yel. How, how? if I may speak without offence, sir,
I hold my life——
Touch. jun. What, sir?
Yel. Go to,—you'll pardon me?
Touch. jun. Pardon you? ay, sir.
Yel. Will you, i'faith?
Touch. jun. Yes, faith, I will.
Yel. You'll steal away some man's daughter: am I near you?
Do you turn aside? you gentlemen are mad wags!
I wonder things can be so warily carried,
And parents blinded so: but they're serv'd right,
That have two eyes and were so dull a' sight.
Touch. jun. Thy doom take hold of thee! [*Aside.*
Yel. To-morrow noon
Shall show your ring well done.

Touch. jun. Being so, 'tis soon.—
Thanks, and your leave, sweet gentlewoman.
Moll. Sir, you're welcome.—
[*Exit* TOUCHWOOD *junior.*
O were I made of wishes, I went with thee! [*Aside.*
Yel. Come now, we'll see how the rules[1] go within.
Moll. That robs my joy; there I lose all I win.
[*Aside. Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Hall in ALLWIT'S *House.*

Enter DAVY *and* ALLWIT *severally.*

Davy. Honesty wash my eyes! I've spied a wittol.
[*Aside.*
Allwit. What, Davy Dahanna? welcome from North Wales, i'faith!
And is sir Walter come?
Davy. New come to town, sir.
Allwit. In to the maids, sweet Davy, and give order
His chamber be made ready instantly.
My wife's as great as she can wallow, Davy, and longs
For nothing but pickled cucumbers and his coming;
And now she shall ha't, boy.

---

1 Sports.—Steevens considered that the word "rule" in this sense was a corruption of "revel;" but it is more probable that the original meaning was *behaviour*,—then *riotous behaviour*. See notes of the commentators on *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii. 2,—"What *night-rule* now about this haunted grove."

Davy. She's sure of them, sir.

Allwit. Thy very sight will hold my wife in pleasure
Till the knight come himself; go in, in, in, Davy.
[*Exit* DAVY.
The founder's come to town: I'm like a man
Finding a table furnish'd to his hand,
As mine is still to me, prays for the founder,—
Bless the right worshipful the good founder's life!
I thank him, has maintain'd my house this ten years;
Not only keeps my wife, but 'a keeps me
And all my family; I'm at his table:
He gets me all my children, and pays the nurse
Monthly or weekly; puts me to nothing, rent,
Nor church-duties, not so much as the scavenger:
The happiest state that ever man was born to!
I walk out in a morning; come to breakfast,
Find excellent cheer; a good fire in winter;
Look in my coal-house about midsummer eve,
That's full, five or six chaldron new laid up;
Look in my back-yard, I shall find a steeple
Made up with Kentish faggots, which o'erlooks
The water-house and the windmills: I say nothing,
But smile and pin the door. When she lies in,
As now she's even upon the point of grunting,
A lady lies not in like her; there's her embossings,
Embroiderings, spanglings, and I know not what,
As if she lay with all the gaudy-shops[1]

[1] Shops where finery is sold.

In Gresham's Burse [1] about her; then her restoratives,
Able to set up a young pothecary,
And richly stock the foreman of a drug-shop;
Her sugar by whole loaves, her wines by rundlets.
I see these things, but, like a happy man,
I pay for none at all; yet fools think's [2] mine;
I have the name, and in his gold I shine:
And where some merchants would in soul kiss hell
To buy a paradise for their wives, and dye
Their conscience in the bloods of prodigal heirs
To deck their night-piece, yet all this being done,
Eaten with jealousy to the inmost bone,—
As what affliction nature more constrains,
Than feed the wife plump for another's veins?—
These torments stand I freed of; I'm as clear
From jealousy of a wife as from the charge:
O, two miraculous blessings! 'tis the knight
Hath took that labour all out of my hands:
I may sit still and play; he's jealous for me,
Watches her steps, sets spies; I live at ease,
He has both the cost and torment: when the string [3]
Of his heart frets, I feed, laugh, or sing,
La dildo, dildo la dildo, la dildo dildo de dildo! [*Sings.*

Enter two Servants.

First Ser. What, has he got a singing in his head now?

---

[1] The Royal Exchange built by Sir Thomas Gresham.
[2] *i.e.*, think these things is [are] mine.
[3] Old ed. "strings."

Sec. Ser. Now's out of work, he falls to making dildoes.
Allwit. Now, sirs, sir Walter's come.
First Ser. Is our master come?
Allwit. Your master! what am I?
First Ser. Do not you know, sir?
Allwit. Pray, am not I your master?
First Ser. O, you're but
Our mistress's husband.
Allwit. *Ergo*, knave, your master.
First Ser. *Negatur argumentum.*—Here comes sir Walter:

Enter Sir WALTER *and* DAVY.

Now 'a stands bare as well as we; make the most of him,
He's but one peep above a serving-man,
And so much his horns make him.
Sir Wal. How dost, Jack?
Allwit. Proud of your worship's health, sir.
Sir Wal. How does your wife?
Allwit. E'en after your own making, sir;
She's a tumbler, 'afaith, the nose and belly meets.
Sir Wal. They'll part in time again.
Allwit. At the good hour they will, and please your worship.
Sir Wal. Here, sirrah, pull off my boots.—Put on,[1] put on, Jack. [Servant *pulls off his boots.*

[1] *i.e.*, put on your hat.

Allwit. I thank your kind worship, sir.
Sir Wal. Slippers! heart, you are sleepy!
[Servant *brings slippers.*
Allwit. The game begins already. [*Aside.*
Sir Wal. Pish, put on, Jack.
Allwit. Now I must do't, or he'll be as angry now,
As if I had put it on at first bidding;
'Tis but observing,
'Tis but observing a man's humour once,
And he may ha' him by the nose all his life. [*Aside.*
Sir Wal. What entertainment has lain open here? So
No strangers in my absence?
First Ser. Sure, sir, not any.
Allwit. His jealousy begins: am not I happy now,
That can laugh inward whilst his marrow melts? [*Aside.*
Sir Wal. How do you satisfy me?
First Ser. Good sir, be patient!
Sir Wal. For two months' absence I'll be satisfied.
First Ser. No living creature enter'd——
Sir Wal. Enter'd? come, swear!
First Ser. You will not hear me out, sir——
Sir Wal. Yes, I'll hear't out, sir.
First Ser. Sir, he can tell himself——
Sir Wal. Heart, he can tell?
Do you think I'll trust him? as a usurer
With forfeited lordships:—him? O monstrous injury! 90
Believe him? can the devil speak ill of darkness?—
What can you say, sir?
Allwit. Of my soul and conscience, sir,

She's a wife as honest of her body to me
As any lord's proud lady [e'er] can be!
Sir Wal. Yet, by your leave, I heard you were once offering
To go to bed to her.
Allwit. No, I protest, sir!
Sir Wal. Heart, if you do, you shall take all! I'll marry.
Allwit. O, I beseech you, sir!
Sir Wal. That wakes the slave,
And keeps his flesh in awe. [*Aside.*
Allwit. I'll stop that gap
Where'er I find it open: I have poison'd
His hopes in marriage already [with]
Some old rich widows, and some landed virgins;
And I'll fall to work still before I'll lose him;
He's yet too sweet to part from. [*Aside.*

Enter WAT *and* NICK.

Wat. God-den,[1] father.
Allwit. Ha, villain, peace!
Nick. God-den, father.
Allwit. Peace, bastard!
Should he hear 'em! [*Aside.*]—These are two foolish children,
They do not know the gentleman that sits there.
Sir Wal. O, Wat—how dost, Nick? go to school, ply your books, boys, ha?

[1] Good evening.

Allwit. Where's your legs, whoresons?—They should kneel indeed,
If they could say their prayers.

Sir Wal. Let me see, stay,—
How shall I dispose of these two brats now
When I am married? for they must not mingle
Amongst my children that I get in wedlock;
'Twill make foul work that, and raise many storms.
I will bind Wat prentice to a goldsmith,
My father Yellowhammer, as fit as can be;
Nick with some vintner; good, goldsmith and vintner;
There will be wine in bowls, i'faith. [*Aside.*

Enter MISTRESS ALLWIT.

Mis. All. Sweet knight,
Welcome! I've all my longings now in town;
Now welcome the good hour!

Sir Wal. How cheers my mistress?

Mis. All. Made lightsome e'en by him that made me heavy.

Sir Wal. Methinks she shows gallantly, like a moon at full, sir.

Allwit. True, and if she bear a male child, there's the man in the moon, sir.

Sir Wal. 'Tis but the boy in the moon yet, goodman calf.

Allwit. There was a man, the boy had ne'er been there else.

Sir Wal. It shall be yours, sir.

Allwit. No, by my troth, I'll swear
It's none of mine; let him that got it keep it!—
Thus do I rid myself of fear,
Lie soft, sleep hard, drink wine, and eat good cheer.
[*Aside.* *Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Street.

Enter TOUCHWOOD *senior and* MISTRESS TOUCHWOOD.

Mis. Touch. 'Twill be so tedious, sir, to live from you,
But that necessity must be obey'd.

Touch. sen. I would it might not, wife! the tediousness
Will be the most part mine, that understand
The blessings I have in thee; so to part,
That drives the torment to a knowing heart.
But, as thou sayst, we must give way to need,
And live awhile asunder; our desires
Are both too fruitful for our barren fortunes.
How adverse runs the destiny of some creatures!
Some only can get riches and no children;
We only can get children and no riches:
Then 'tis the prudent's[t] part to check our will,[1]
And, till our state rise, make our bloods lie still.
'Life, every year a child, and some years two!
Besides drinkings abroad, that's never reckon'd;
This gear will not hold out.

[1] Old ed. "willes."

Mis. Touch. Sir, for a time
I'll take the courtesy of my uncle's house,
If you be pleas'd to like on't, till prosperity
Look with a friendly eye upon our states.
Touch. sen. Honest wife, I thank thee! I never knew
The perfect treasure thou brought'st with thee more
Than at this instant minute: a man's happy
When he's at poorest, that has match'd his soul
As rightly as his body: had I married
A sensual fool now, as 'tis hard to 'scape it
'Mongst gentlewomen of our time, she would ha' hang'd
About my neck, and never left her hold
Till she had kiss'd me into wanton businesses,
Which at the waking of my better judgment
I should have curs'd most bitterly,
And laid a thicker vengeance on my act
Than misery of the birth; which were enough
If it were born to greatness, whereas mine
Is sure of beggary, though 't were got in wine.
Fulness of joy showeth the goodness in thee;
Thou art a matchless wife: farewell, my joy!
Mis. Touch. I shall not want your sight?
Touch. sen. I'll see thee often,
Talk in mirth, and play at kisses with thee;
Anything, wench, but what may beget beggars:
There I give o'er the set, throw down the cards,
And dare not take them up.
Mis. Touch. Your will be mine, sir! [*Exit.*
Touch. sen. This does not only make her honesty perfect,

But her discretion, and approves her judgment.
Had her desire[s] been wanton, they'd been blameless,
In being lawful ever; but of all creatures,
I hold that wife a most unmatchèd treasure,
That can unto her fortunes fix her pleasure,
And not unto her blood: this is like wedlock;
The feast of marriage is not lust, but love,
And care of the estate. When I please blood,
Merrily I sing and suck out others' then:
'Tis many a wise man's fault; but of all men
I am the most unfortunate in that game
That ever pleas'd both genders; I ne'er play'd yet
Under a bastard; the poor wenches curse me
To the pit where'er I come; they were ne'er serv'd so,
But us'd to have more words than one to a bargain:
I've such a fatal finger in such business,
I must forth with't; chiefly for country wenches,
For every harvest I shall hinder haymaking;
I had no less than seven lay in last progress,
Within three weeks of one another's time.

Enter a Country Girl *with a child.*

C. Girl. O snaphance,[1] have I found you?
Touch. sen. How snaphance?
C. Girl. Do you see your workmanship? nay, turn not from't,
Nor offer to escape; for if you do,

[1] A spring-lock to a gun: hence applied to anything that strikes sharply.

I'll carry it through the streets, and follow you.
Your name may well be call'd Touchwood,—a pox on you!
You do but touch and take; thou hast undone me:
I was a maid before, I can bring a certificate
For it from both the churchwardens.
Touch. sen. I'll have
The parson's hand too, or I'll not yield to't.
C. Girl. Thou shalt have more, thou villain! Nothing grieves me
But Ellen my poor cousin in Derbyshire;
Thou'st crack'd her marriage quite; she'll have a bout with thee.
Touch. sen. Faith, when she will, I'll have a bout with her.
C. Girl. A law-bout, sir, I mean.
Touch. sen. True, lawyers use
Such bouts as other men do; and if that
Be all thy grief, I'll tender her a husband;
I keep of purpose two or three gulls in pickle
To eat such mutton[1] with, and she shall choose one.
Do but in courtesy, faith, wench, excuse me
Of this half yard of flesh, in which, I think,
It wants a nail or two.
C. Girl. No; thou shalt find, villain,
It hath right shape, and all the nails it should have.
Touch. sen. Faith, I am poor; do a charitable deed, wench;
I am a younger brother, and have nothing.

[1] A cant term that needs no explanation.

C. Girl. Nothing? thou hast too much, thou lying villain,
Unless thou wert more thankful!
Touch. sen. I've no dwelling;
I brake up house but this morning; pray thee, pity me;
I'm a good fellow, faith; have been too kind
To people of your gender; if I ha't
Without my belly, none of your sex shall want it:
That word has been of force to move a woman.
There's tricks enough to rid thy hand on't, wench;
Some rich man's porch to-morrow before day,
Or else anon i' the evening; twenty devices.
Here's all I have, i'faith; take purse and all,
And would I were rid of all the ware i' the shop so!
[*Gives money.*
C. Girl. Where I find manly dealings, I am pitiful:
This shall not trouble you.
Touch. sen. And I protest, wench,
The next I'll keep myself.
C. Girl. Soft, let it be got first.
This is the fifth; if e'er I venture more,
Where I now go for a maid, may I ride for a whore!
[*Exit.*
Touch. sen. What shift she'll make now with this piece of flesh
In this strict time of Lent, I cannot imagine;
Flesh dare not peep abroad now: I have known
This city now above this seven years,
But, I protest, in better state of government
I never knew it yet, nor ever heard of;

There has been more religious wholesome laws
In the half-circle of a year erected
For common good than memory e'er knew of,
Setting apart corruption of promoters,[1]
And other poisonous officers, that infect
And with a venomous breath taint every goodness.

Enter Sir OLIVER KIX *and* LADY KIX.

Lady Kix. O that e'er I was begot, or bred, or born!
Sir Ol. Be content, sweet wife.
Touch. sen. What's here to do now?
I hold my life she's in deep passion[2]
For the imprisonment of veal and mutton,
Now kept in garrets; weeps for some calf's head now:
Methinks her husband's head might serve, with bacon.
[*Aside.*

Enter TOUCHWOOD *junior.*

Touch. jun.[3] Hist!
Sir Ol. Patience, sweet wife.
Touch. jun. Brother, I've sought you strangely.
Touch. sen. Why, what's the business?
Touch. jun. With all speed thou canst
Procure a license for me.
Touch. sen. How, a license?

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[1] Informers, who for prosecuting delinquents were rewarded with a part of the fines. Citizens complained bitterly of the annoyance to which they were subjected by these informers. See *Remembrancia*, p. 401.
[2] Sorrow.
[3] Old ed. "*Lady.*"

Touch. jun. Cud's foot, she's lost else! I shall miss her ever.

Touch. sen. Nay, sure thou shalt not miss so fair a mark[1]
For thirteen shillings fourpence.

Touch. jun. Thanks by hundreds!

[*Exeunt* TOUCHWOOD *senior and junior.*

Sir Ol. Nay, pray thee, cease; I'll be at more cost yet,
Thou know'st we're rich enough.

Lady Kix. All but in blessings,
And there the beggar goes beyond us: O-o-o!
To be seven years a wife, and not a child!
O, not a child!

Sir Ol. Sweet wife, have patience.

Lady Kix. Can any woman have a greater cut?

Sir Ol. I know 'tis great, but what of that, [sweet] wife?
I cannot do withal;[2] there's things making,
By thine own doctor's advice, at pothecary's:
I spare for nothing, wife; no, if the price

---

[1] A coin worth 13*s.* 4*d.*

[2] *i.e.*, I cannot help it.—For the *double entendre* cf. Day's *Isle of Gulls*, iii. 1:—

"*Miso.* . . . Ay, ay, Dorus, I tell thee in tears he hath not done by me as a husband should do.

Dorus. 'Tis nothing to me; I cannot do withal, madam: would I could.

Miso. Yes, marry, mayst thou, Dorus; thou mayst and shalt do withal, too, and thou wilt."

In spite of Gifford's virtuous indignation, I fear there is a similar play on words intended in *Merchant of Venice*, iii. 4, l. 72.

Were forty marks a spoonful, I would give
A thousand pound to purchase fruitfulness:
It is but bating so many good works
In the erecting of bridewells and spittlehouses,
And so fetch it up again; for having none,
I mean to make good deeds my children.
Lady Kix. Give me but those good deeds, and I'll find children.
Sir Ol. Hang thee, thou'st had too many!
Lady Kix. Thou liest, brevity.
Sir Ol. O horrible! dar'st thou call me brevity?
Dar'st thou be so short with me?
Lady Kix. Thou deserv'st worse:
Think but upon the goodly lands and livings
That's kept back through want on't.
Sir Ol. Talk not on't, pray thee;
Thou'lt make me play the woman and weep too.
Lady Kix. 'Tis our dry barrenness puffs up Sir Walter;
None gets by your not getting but that knight;
He's made by th' means, and fats his fortunes shortly
In a great dowry with a goldsmith's daughter.
Sir Ol. They may be all deceiv'd; be but you patient, wife.
Lady Kix. I've suffer'd a long time.
Sir Ol. Suffer thy heart out;
A pox suffer thee!
Lady Kix. Nay, thee, thou desertless slave!
Sir Ol. Come, come, I ha' done: you'll to the gossiping
Of master Allwit's child?

Lady Kix. Yes, to my much joy!
Every one gets before me; there's my sister
Was married but at Bartholomew-eve last,
And she can have two children at a birth:
O, one of them, one of them, would ha' serv'd my turn!
Sir Ol. Sorrow consume thee! thou'rt still crossing me,
And know'st my nature.

Enter Maid.

Maid. O mistress!—weeping or railing,
That's our house-harmony. [*Aside.*
Lady Kix. What sayst, Jug?
Maid. The sweetest news!
Lady Kix. What is't, wench?
Maid. Throw down your doctor's drugs,
They're all but heretics; I bring certain remedy,
That has been taught and prov'd, and never fail'd.
Sir Ol. O that, that, that, or nothing!
Maid. There's a gentleman,
I haply have his name too, that has got
Nine children by one water that he useth:
It never misses; they come so fast upon him,
He was fain to give it over.
Lady Kix. His name, sweet Jug?
Maid. One master Touchwood, a fine gentleman,
But run behind-hand much with getting children.
Sir Ol. Is't possible!
Maid. Why, sir, he'll undertake,

Using that water, within fifteen year,
For all your wealth, to make you a poor man,
You shall so swarm with children.
Sir Ol. I'll venture that, i'faith.
Lady Kix. That shall you, husband.
Maid. But I must tell you first, he's very dear.
Sir Ol. No matter, what serves wealth for?
Lady Kix. True, sweet husband;
There's land to come; put case his water stands me
In some five hundred pound a pint,
'Twill fetch a thousand, and a kersten[1] soul,
And that's worth all, sweet husband: I'll about it.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Before ALLWIT'S *House.*

Enter ALLWIT.

Allwit. I'll go bid gossips presently myself,
That's all the work I'll do; nor need I stir,
But that it is my pleasure to walk forth,
And air myself a little: I am tied
To nothing in this business; what I do
Is merely recreation, not constraint.
Here's running to and fro! nurse upon nurse,
Three charewomen, besides maids and neighbours' children.

[1] A corruption of *Christian.*

Fie, what a trouble have I rid my hands on!
It makes me sweat to think on't.

Enter Sir WALTER WHOREHOUND.

Sir Wal. How now, Jack?
Allwit. I'm going to bid gossips for your worship's child, sir;
A goodly girl, i'faith! give you joy on her;
She looks as if she had two thousand pound
To her portion, and run away with a tailor;
A fine plump black-ey'd slut: under correction, sir,
I take delight to see her.—Nurse!

Enter Dry Nurse.

Dry N. Do you call, sir?
Allwit. I call not you, I call the wet nurse hither.
[*Exit* Dry Nurse.
Give me the wet nurse!—

Enter Wet Nurse *carrying child.*

Ay, 'tis thou; come hither,
Come hither:
Let's see her once again; I cannot choose
But buss her thrice an hour.
Wet N. You may be proud on't, sir;
'Tis the best piece of work that e'er you did.
Allwit. Think'st thou so, nurse? what sayst to Wat and Nick?

Wet N. They're pretty children both, but here's a wench
Will be a knocker.
Allwit. Pup,—sayst thou me so?—pup, little countess!—
Faith, sir, I thank your worship for this girl
Ten thousand times and upward.
Sir Wal. I am glad
I have her for you, sir.
Allwit. Here, take her in, nurse;
Wipe her, and give her spoon-meat.
Wet N. Wipe your mouth,[1] sir. [*Exit with the child.*
Allwit. And now about these gossips.
Sir Wal. Get but two;
I'll stand for one myself.
Allwit. To your own child, sir?
Sir Wal. The better policy, it prevents suspicion;
'Tis good to play with rumour at all weapons.
Allwit. Troth, I commend your care, sir; 'tis a thing
That I should ne'er have thought on.
Sir Wal. The more slave:
When man turns base, out goes his soul's pure flame,
The fat of ease o'erthrows[2] the eyes of shame.
Allwit. I'm studying who to get for godmother,
Suitable to your worship. Now I ha' thought on't.

[1] "Wipe your mouth"=gull yourself, make a fool of yourself. Cf. Fletcher's *The Pilgrim*, v. 3:—

> "Would he had but the patience to discern it
> And policy to *wipe their lips*."

[2] "Qy. 'o'ergrows?'"—*Dyce.*

Sir Wal. I'll ease you of that care, and please myself in't—
My love the goldsmith's daughter, if I send,
Her father will command her. [*Aside.*]—Davy Dahanna![1]

Enter DAVY.

Allwit. I'll fit your worship then with a male partner.
Sir Wal. What is he?
Allwit. A kind, proper gentleman,
Brother to master Touchwood.
Sir Wal. I know Touchwood:
Has he a brother living?
Allwit. A neat bachelor.
Sir Wal. Now we know him, we will make shift with him:
Despatch, the time draws near.—Come hither, Davy.
[*Exit with* DAVY.
Allwit. In troth, I pity him; he ne'er stands still: 50
Poor knight, what pains he takes! sends this way one,
That way another; has not an hour's leisure:
I would not have thy toil for all thy pleasure.

Enter two Promoters.

Ha, how now? what are these that stand so close
At the street-corner, pricking up their ears
And snuffing up their noses, like rich men's dogs
When the first course goes in? By the mass, promoters;

[1] Old ed. "Dahumma."

'Tis so, I hold my life; and planted there
T' arrest the dead corps [1] of poor calves and sheep,
Like ravenous creditors, that will not suffer
The bodies of their poor departed debtors
To go to th' grave, but e'en in death to vex
And stay the corps with bills of Middlesex.
This Lent will fat the whoresons up with sweetbreads,
And lard their whores with lamb-stones: what their golls [2]
Can clutch goes presently to their Molls and Dolls:
The bawds will be so fat with what they earn,
Their chins [3] will hang like udders by Easter-eve,
And, being stroak'd, will give the milk of witches.
How did the mongrels hear my wife lies in?
Well, I may baffle 'em gallantly. [*Aside.*]—By your favour, gentlemen,
I am a stranger both unto the city
And to her carnal strictness.

First Pro. Good; your will, sir?

Allwit. Pray, tell me where one dwells that kills this Lent?

First Pro. How? kills?—Come hither, Dick; a bird, a bird!

Sec. Pro. What is't that you would have?

Allwit. Faith, any flesh;
But I long especially for veal and green-sauce.

First Pro. Green goose, you shall be sauc'd. [*Aside.*

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[1] A plural.

[2] A cant term for hands.

[3] A double chin was supposed to be the distinguishing mark of a bawd. Cf. *Northward Ho*, i. 3:—"O fie, sir, fie! the boy, he does not look like a bawd; he has no double chin."

Allwit. I've half a scornful stomach,
No fish will be admitted.
First Pro. Not this Lent, sir?
Allwit. Lent? what cares colon[1] here for Lent?
First Pro. You say well, sir;
Good reason that the colon of a gentleman,
As you were lately pleas'd to term your worship['s], sir,
Should be fulfill'd with answerable food,
To sharpen blood, delight health, and tickle nature.
Were you directed hither to this street, sir?
Allwit. That I was, ay, marry.
Sec. Pro. And the butcher, belike,
Should kill and sell close in some upper room?
Allwit. Some apple-loft, as I take it, or a coal-house;
I know not which, i'faith.
Sec. Pro. Either will serve:
This butcher shall kiss Newgate, 'less he turn up
The bottom of the pocket of his apron.— [*Aside.*
You go to seek him?
Allwit. Where you shall not find him:
I'll buy, walk by your noses with my flesh,
Sheep-biting mongrels, hand-basket freebooters!
My wife lies in—a foutra[2] for promoters! [*Exit.*

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[1] The largest of the intestines. Cf. Dekker and Webster's *History of Sir Thomas Wyatt*:—"O poor shrimp, how art thou fallen away for want of mouching! O *colon* cries out most tyrannically."—Dyce's *Webster*, 1 vol. ed. p. 193.

[2] *i.e.*, a fig for. So Pistol—"A *foutre* for the world and worldlings base."

First Pro. That shall not serve your turn.—What a rogue's this!
How cunningly he came over us!

Enter Man *with a basket under his cloak.*

Sec. Pro. Hush't, stand close!
Man. I have 'scaped well thus far; they say the knaves
Are wondrous hot and busy.
First Pro. By your leave, sir,
We must see what you have under your cloak there.
Man. Have? I have nothing.
First Pro. No? do you tell us that? what makes this lump
Stick out then? we must see, sir.
Man. What will you see, sir?
A pair of sheets and two of my wife's foul smocks
Going to the washers.
Sec. Pro. O, we love that sight well!
You cannot please us better. What, do you gull us?
Call you these shirts and smocks?
[*Seizes basket and takes out of it a piece of meat.*
Man. Now, a pox choke you!
You've cozen'd me and five of my wife's kindred
Of a good dinner; we must make it up now
With herrings and milk-pottage. [*Exit.*
First Pro. 'Tis all veal.
Sec. Pro. All veal?
Pox, the worse luck! I promis'd faithfully
To send this morning a fat quarter of lamb

To a kind gentlewoman in Turnbull Street[1]
That longs, and how I'm crost!
First Pro. Let us share this, and see what hap comes next then.
Sec. Pro. Agreed. Stand close again, another booty:

Enter Man *with a basket.*

What's he?
First Pro. Sir, by your favour.
Man. Meaning me, sir?
First Pro. Good master Oliver? cry thee mercy, i'faith!
What hast thou there?
Man. A rack of mutton, sir,
And half a lamb; you know my mistress' diet.
First Pro. Go, go, we see thee not; away, keep close!—
Heart, let him pass! thou'lt never have the wit
To know our benefactors.
Sec. Pro. I have forgot him.
First Pro. 'Tis master Beggarland's man, the wealthy merchant,
That is in fee with us.
Sec. Pro. Now I've a feeling of him. [*Exit* Man.
First Pro. You know he purchas'd the whole Lent together,
Gave us ten groats a-piece on Ash-Wednesday.
Sec. Pro. True, true.

[1] A disreputable street in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell.

First Pro. A wench!
Sec. Pro. Why, then, stand close indeed.

Enter Country Girl *with a basket.*

C. Girl. Women had need of wit, if they'll shift here,
And she that hath wit may shift anywhere. [*Aside.*
First Pro. Look, look! poor fool, sh'as left the rump uncover'd too,
More to betray her! this is like a murderer
That will outface the deed with a bloody band.
Sec. Pro. What time of the year is't, sister?
C. Girl. O sweet gentlemen!
I'm a poor servant, let me go.
First Pro. You shall, wench,
But this must stay with us.
C. Girl. O you undo me, sir!
'Tis for a wealthy gentlewoman that takes physic, sir;
The doctor does allow my mistress mutton.
O, as you tender the dear life of a gentlewoman!
I'll bring my master to you; he shall show you
A true authority from the higher powers,
And I'll run every foot.
Sec. Pro. Well, leave your basket then,
And run and spare not.
C. Girl. Will you swear then to me
To keep it till I come?
First Pro. Now by this light I will.
C. Girl. What say you, gentleman?

Sec. Pro. What a strange wench 'tis!—
Would we might perish else.
C. Girl. Nay, then I run, sir.
[*Leaves the basket, and exit.*
First Pro. And ne'er return, I hope.
Sec. Pro. A politic baggage! she makes us swear to keep it:
I prithee look what market she hath made.
First Pro. Imprimis, sir, a good fat loin of mutton.
[*Taking out a loin of mutton.*
What comes next under this cloth? now for a quarter
Of lamb.
Sec. Pro. Not, for a shoulder of mutton.
First Pro. Done!
Sec. Pro. Why, done, sir!
First Pro. By the mass, I feel I've lost;
'Tis of more weight, i'faith.
Sec. Pro. Some loin of veal?
First Pro. No, faith, here's a lamb's head, I feel that plainly;
Why, [I'll] yet win my wager.
Sec. Pro. Ha!
First Pro. 'Swounds, what's here! [*Taking out a child.*
Sec. Pro. A child!
First Pro. A pox of all dissembling cunning whores!
Sec. Pro. Here's an unlucky breakfast!
First Pro. What shall's do?
Sec. Pro. The quean made us swear to keep it too.
First Pro. We might leave it else.
Sec. Pro. Villanous strange!

Life, had she none to gull but poor promoters,
That watch hard for a living?
First Pro. Half our gettings
Must run in sugar-sops and nurses' wages now,
Besides many a pound of soap and tallow;
We've need to get loins of mutton still, to save
Suet to change for candles.
Sec. Pro. Nothing mads me
But this was a lamb's head with you; you felt it:
She has made calves' heads of us.
First Pro. Prithee, no more on't;
There's time to get it up; it is not come
To Mid-Lent Sunday yet.
Sec. Pro. I am so angry,
I'll watch no more to-day.
First Pro. Faith, nor I neither.
Sec. Pro. Why, then, I'll make a motion.
First Pro. Well, what is't?
Sec. Pro. Let's e'en go to the Checker at Queenhive,[1]
And roast the loin of mutton till young flood;
Then send the child to Branford.[2] [*Exeunt.*

[1] Queenhithe.
[2] Brentford. The name is usually written *Brainford.*

SCENE III.

A Hall in ALLWIT'S *House.*

Enter ALLWIT *in one of* Sir WALTER'S *suits, and* DAVY *trussing*[1] *him.*

Allwit. 'Tis a busy day at our house, Davy.
Davy. Always the kursning-day,[2] sir.
Allwit. Truss, truss me, Davy.
Davy. No matter and you were hang'd, sir. [*Aside.*
Allwit. How does this suit fit me, Davy?
Davy. Excellent neatly;
My master's things were ever fit for you, sir,
E'en to a hair, you know.
Allwit. Thou'st hit it right, Davy:
We ever jump'd in one this ten years, Davy;
So, well said.—

Enter Man *with a box.*

What art thou?
Man. Your comfit-maker's man, sir.
Allwit. O sweet youth!
In to the nurse, quick, quick, 'tis time, i'faith.
Your mistress will be here?
Man. She was setting forth, sir. [*Exit.*
Allwit. Here comes our gossips now: O, I shall have
Such kissing work to-day.—

[1] Tying the points of his breeches. [2] Christening-day.

Enter two Puritans.

Sweet mistress Underman
Welcome, i'faith.
First Pur. Give you joy of your fine girl, sir:
Grant that her education may be pure,
And become one of the faithful!
Allwit. Thanks to your sisterly wishes, mistress Underman.
Sec. Pur. Are any of the brethren's wives yet come?
Allwit. There are some wives within, and some at home.
First Pur. Verily, thanks, sir. [*Exeunt* Puritans.
Allwit. Verily you're an ass, forsooth:
I must fit all these times, or there's no music.
Here comes a friendly and familiar pair:

Enter two Gossips.

Now I like these wenches well.
First Gos. How dost, sirrah?
Allwit. Faith, well, I thank you, neighbour;—and how dost thou?
Sec. Gos. Want nothing but such getting, sir, as thine.
Allwit. My gettings, wench? they're poor.
First Gos. Fie, that thou'lt say so;
Thou'st as fine children as a man can get.
Davy. Ay, as a man can get, and that's my master.
[*Aside.*

Allwit. They're pretty foolish things, put to making in minutes,
I ne'er stand long about 'em. Will you walk in, wenches?
[*Exeunt* Gossips.

Enter TOUCHWOOD *junior and* MOLL.

Touch. jun. The happiest meeting that our souls could wish for!
Here is the ring ready; I'm beholding
Unto your father's haste, has kept his hour.
Moll. He never kept it better.

Enter Sir WALTER WHOREHOUND.

Touch. jun. Back, be silent,
Sir Wal. Mistress and partner, I will put you both
Into one cup.
Davy. Into one cup? most proper;
A fitting compliment for a goldsmith's daughter. [*Aside.*
Allwit. Yes, sir, that's he must be your worship's partner
In this day's business, master Touchwood's brother.
Sir Wal. I embrace your acquaintance, sir.
Touch. jun. It vows your service, sir.
Sir Wal. It's near high time; come, master Allwit.
Allwit. Ready, sir.
Sir Wal. Wilt please you walk?
Touch. jun. Sir, I obey your time. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Before ALLWIT'S *House.*

Enter Midwife *with the child,* LADY KIX *and other* Gossips, *who exeunt; then* MAUDLIN, Puritans, *and other* Gossips.

First Gos. Good mistress Yellowhammer——
Maud. In faith, I will not.
First Gos. Indeed it shall be yours.[1]
Maud. I have sworn, i'faith.
First Gos. I'll stand still then.
Maud. So, will you let the child
Go without company, and make me forsworn?
First Gos. You are such another creature!
[*Exeunt* First Gossip *and* MAUDLIN.
Sec. Gos. Before me?
I pray come down a little.
Third Gos. Not a whit;
I hope I know my place.
Sec. Gos. Your place? great wonder, sure!
Are you any better than a comfit-maker's wife?
Third Gos. And that's as good at all times as a pothecary's.
Sec. Gos. Ye lie! yet I forbear you too.
[*Exeunt* Second *and* Third Gossips.

[1] Maudlin and the First Gossip are "straining courtesies," each entreating the other to take precedence.

First Pur. Come, sweet sister; we go
In unity, and show the fruits of peace,
Like children of the spirit.
Sec. Pur. I love lowliness. [*Exeunt* Puritans.
Fourth Gos. True, so say I, though they strive more;
There comes as proud behind as goes before.
Fifth Gos. Every inch, i'faith. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A Room in TOUCHWOOD *junior's lodgings.*

Enter TOUCHWOOD *junior and* Parson.

Touch. jun. O sir, if e'er you felt the force of love,
Pity it in me!

Par. Yes, though I ne'er was married, sir,
I've felt the force of love from good men's daughters,
And some that will be maids yet three years hence.
Have you got a license?

Touch. jun. Here, 'tis ready, sir.

Par. That's well.

Touch. jun. The ring, and all things perfect; she'll steal hither.

Par. She shall be welcome, sir; I'll not be long
A clapping you together.

Touch. jun. O, here she's come, sir!

Enter MOLL *and* TOUCHWOOD *senior.*

Par. What's he?

Touch. jun. My honest brother.

Touch. sen. Quick, make haste, sirs!

Moll. You must despatch with all the speed you can,
For I shall be miss'd straight; I made hard shift
For this small time I have.

Par. Then I'll not linger,
Place that ring upon her finger:

[TOUCHWOOD *junior puts ring on* MOLL'S *finger.*

This the finger plays the part,
Whose master-vein shoots from the heart:
Now join hands——

Enter YELLOWHAMMER *and* Sir W. WHOREHOUND.

Yel. Which I will sever,
And so ne'er again meet, never!

Moll. O, we're betray'd!

Touch. jun. Hard fate!

Sir Wal. I'm struck with wonder!

Yel. Was this the politic fetch, thou mystical baggage,
Thou disobedient strumpet!—And were [you]
So wise to send for her to such an end?

Sir Wal. Now I disclaim the end; you'll make me mad.

Yel. And what are you, sir?

Touch. jun. And you cannot see
With those two glasses, put on a pair more.

Yel. I dream'd of anger still.—Here, take your ring, sir,— [*Taking ring off* MOLL'S *finger.*
Ha! this? life, 'tis the same! abominable!
Did not I sell this ring?

Touch. jun. I think you did;
You receiv'd money for't.
Yel. Heart, hark you, knight;
Here's no[1] unconscionable villany!
Set me a-work to make the wedding-ring,
And come with an intent to steal my daughter!
Did ever runaway match it!
Sir Wal. This your brother, sir?
Touch. sen. He can tell that as well as I.
Yel. The very posy mocks me to my face,—
Love that's wise
Blinds parents' eyes.
I thank your wisdom, sir, for blinding of us;
We've good hope to recover our sight shortly:
In the meantime I will lock up this baggage
As carefully as my gold; she shall see
As little sun, if a close room or so
Can keep her from the light on't.
Moll. O sweet father,
For love's sake, pity me!
Yel. Away!
Moll. Farewell, sir;
All content bless thee! and take this for comfort,
Though violence keep me, thou canst lose me never,
I'm ever thine, although we part for ever.
Yel. Ay, we shall part you, minx. [*Exit with* MOLL.
Sir Wal. Your acquaintance, sir,
Came very lately, yet it came too soon;

[1] Ironical.

I must hereafter know you for no friend,
But one that I must shun like pestilence,
Or the disease of lust.
Touch. jun. Like enough, sir;
You ha' ta'en me at the worst time for words
That e'er ye pick'd out: faith, do not wrong me, sir.
[*Exit with* Parson.
Touch. sen. Look after him, and spare not: there he walks
That ne'er yet receiv'd baffling:[1] you are blest
More than ever I knew; go, take your rest. [*Exit.*
Sir Wal. I pardon you, you are both losers. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A bed thrust out upon the stage; ALLWIT'S *Wife in it.*

Enter Midwife *with the child,* LADY KIX, MAUDLIN, Puritans, *and other* Gossips.

First Gos. How is it, woman? we have brought you home
A kursen[2] soul.
Mis. All. Ay, I thank your pains.
First Pur. And, verily, well kursen'd, i' the right way,
Without idolatry or superstition,
After the pure manner of Amsterdam.[3]

---

[1] "Received baffling" = endured insult. See note 2, vol. iv. p. 26.
[2] Christened.
[3] See note 1, vol. ii. p. 96.

Mis. All. Sit down, good neighbours.—Nurse.
Nurse. At hand, forsooth.
Mis. All. Look they have all low stools.
Nurse. They have, forsooth.
[*All the* Gossips *seat themselves.*
Sec. Gos. Bring the child hither, nurse.—How say you now, gossip,
Is't not a chopping girl? so like the father.
Third Gos. As if it had been spit out of his mouth!
Ey'd,[1] nos'd, and brow'd, as like [as] a girl can be,
Only, indeed, it has the mother's mouth.
Sec. Gos. The mother's mouth up and down,[2] up and down.
Third Gos. 'Tis a large child, she's but a little woman.
First Pur. No, believe me,
A very spiny[3] creature, but all heart;
Well mettled, like the faithful, to endure
Her tribulation here, and raise up seed.
Sec. Gos. She had a sore labour on't, I warrant you;
You can tell, neighbour?
Third Gos. O, she had great speed;
We were afraid once, but she made us all
Have joyful hearts again; 'tis a good soul, i'faith;
The midwife found her a most cheerful daughter.
First Pur. 'Tis the spirit; the sisters are all like her.

---

[1] Old ed. "Ey's."
[2] "Up and down" = exactly. Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, v. 2 :—
"Well mayest thou know her by thy own proportion,
For *up and down* she doth resemble thee."
[3] Slender.

Enter Sir WALTER WHOREHOUND, *carrying a silver standing-cup and two spoons, and* ALLWIT.

Sec. Gos. O, here comes the chief gossip, neighbours!
[*Exit* Nurse.
Sir Wal. The fatness of your wishes to you all, ladies!
Third Gos. O dear, sweet gentleman, what fine words he has!
The fatness of our wishes!
Sec. Gos. Calls us all ladies!
Fourth Gos. I promise you, a fine gentleman and a courteous.
Sec. Gos. Methinks her husband shows like a clown to him.
Third Gos. I would not care what clown my husband were too,
So I had such fine children.
Sec. Gos. Sh'as all fine children, gossip.
Third Gos. Ay, and see how fast they come!
First Pur. Children are blessings,
If they be got with zeal by the brethren,
As I have five at home.
Sir Wal. The worst is past,
I hope, now, gossip.
Mis. All. So I hope too, good sir.
Allwit. What, then, so hope I too, for company;
I've nothing to do else.
Sir Wal. A poor remembrance, lady,
To the love of the babe; I pray, accept of it.
[*Giving cup and spoons.*

Mis. All. O, you are at too much charge, sir!

Sec. Gos. Look, look, what has he given her? what is't, gossip?

Third Gos. Now, by my faith, a fair high standing-cup
And two great 'postle-spoons,[1] one of them gilt.

First Pur. Sure that was Judas then with the red beard.[2]

Sec. Pur. I would not feed
My daughter with that spoon for all the world,
For fear of colouring her hair; red hair
The brethren like not, it consumes them much;
'Tis not the sisters' colour.

Re-enter Nurse *with comfits and wine.*

Allwit. Well said, nurse;
About, about with them amongst the gossips!—
[Nurse *hands about the comfits.*
Now out comes all the tassell'd handkerchers,
They're spread abroad between their knees already;
Now in goes the long fingers that are wash'd
Some thrice a-day in urine; my wife uses it.
Now we shall have such pocketing; see how
They lurch[3] at the lower end! [*Aside.*

First Pur. Come hither, nurse.

Allwit. Again? she has taken twice already. [*Aside.*

---

[1] The usual present of sponsors at christenings. The handle ended in the figure of an apostle.

[2] Judas was always represented in tapestry and paintings with red hair. See notes of the commentators on *As You Like It*, iii. 4, l. 9.

[3] Filch.

First Pur. I had forgot a sister's child that's sick.
[*Taking comfits.*

Allwit. A pox! it seems your purity
Loves sweet things well that puts in thrice together.
Had this been all my cost now, I'd been beggar'd;
These women have no consciences at sweetmeats,[1]
Where'er they come; see and they've not cull'd out
All the long plums too, they've left nothing here
But short wriggle-tail comfits, not worth mouthing:
No mar'l I heard a citizen complain once
That his wife's belly only broke his back;
Mine had been all in fitters[2] seven years since,
But for this worthy knight,
That with a prop upholds my wife and me,
And all my estate buried in Bucklersbury.[3] [*Aside.*

Mis. All. Here, mistress Yellowhammer, and neighbours,
To you all that have taken pains with me,
All the good wives at once!
[*Drinks; after which* Nurse *hands round the wine.*

First Pur. I'll answer for them;
They wish all health and strength, and that you may
Courageously go forward, to perform

---

[1] Cf. Dekker's *Bachelor's Banquet*, cap. iii. :—"Consider then what cost and trouble it will be to him to have all things fine against the christening day: what store of sugar, biscuits, comfits and caraways, marmalade and marchpane, with all kind of sweet suckets and superfluous banqueting stuff, with a hundred other odd and needless trifles, which at that time must fill the pockets of dainty dames."

[2] Fragments.

[3] At this time Bucklersbury was inhabited by grocers and druggists.

The like and many such, like a true sister,
With motherly bearing. [*Drinks.*
Allwit. Now the cups troll about
To wet the gossips' whistles ; it pours down, i'faith ;
They never think of payment. [*Aside.*
First Pur. Fill again, nurse. [*Drinks.*
Allwit. Now bless thee, two at once ! I'll stay no longer ;
It would kill me, and if I paid for it.— [*Aside.*
Will't please you to walk down, and leave the women ?
Sir Wal. With all my heart, Jack.
Allwit. Troth, I cannot blame you.
Sir Wal. Sit you all merry, ladies.
Gossips. Thank your worship, sir.
First Pur. Thank your worship, sir.
Allwit. A pox twice tipple ye, you're last and lowest ! [*Aside.*

[*Exeunt* Sir W. WHOREHOUND *and* ALLWIT.

First Pur. Bring hither that same cup, nurse ; I would fain
Drive away this—hup—antichristian grief. [*Drinks.*
Third Gos. See, gossip, and she lies not in like a countess ;
Would I had such a husband for my daughter !
Fourth Gos. Is not she toward marriage ?
Third Gos. O no, sweet gossip !
Fourth Gos. Why, she's nineteen.
Third Gos. Ay, that she was last Lammas ;
But she has a fault, gossip, a secret fault.

Fourth Gos. A fault? what is't?
Third Gos. I'll tell you when I've drunk. [*Drinks.*
Fourth Gos. Wine can do that, I see, that friendship cannot. [*Aside.*
Third Gos. And now I'll tell you, gossip; she's too free. [*Exit* Nurse.
Fourth Gos. Too free?
Third Gos. O ay, she cannot lie dry in her bed.
Fourth Gos. What, and nineteen?
Third Gos. 'Tis as I tell you, gossip.

Re-enter Nurse, *and whispers* MAUDLIN.

Maud. Speak with me, nurse? who is't?
Nurse. A gentleman
From Cambridge; I think it be your son, forsooth.
Maud. 'Tis my son Tim, i'faith; prithee, call him up
Among the women, 'twill embolden him well,—
[*Exit* Nurse.
For he wants nothing but audacity.
Would the Welsh gentlewoman at home were here now!
[*Aside.*

Lady Kix.[1] Is your son come, forsooth?
Maud. Yes, from the university, forsooth.
Lady Kix. 'Tis great joy on ye.
Maud. There's a great marriage
Towards[2] for him.
Lady Kix. A marriage?

[1] The prefix to the speeches of Lady Kix (throughout the play) is simply "*Lady*" in old ed.
[2] In preparation.

Maud. Yes, sure,
A huge heir in Wales at least to nineteen mountains.
Besides her goods and cattle.

Re-enter Nurse *with* TIM.

Tim. O, I'm betray'd! [*Exit.*
Maud. What, gone again?—Run after him, good nurse;
He is so bashful, that's the spoil of youth: [*Exit* Nurse.
In the university they're kept still to men,
And ne'er train'd up to women's company.
Lady Kix. 'Tis a great spoil of youth indeed.

Re-enter Nurse *and* TIM.

Nurse. Your mother will have it so.
Maud. Why, son! why, Tim!
What, must I rise and fetch you? for shame, son!
Tim. Mother, you do intreat like a fresh-woman;[1]
'Tis against the laws of the university
For any that has answer'd under bachelor
To thrust 'mongst married wives.
Maud. Come, we'll excuse you here.
Tim. Call up my tutor, mother, and I care not.
Maud. What, is your tutor come? have you brought him up?
Tim. I ha' not brought him up, he stands at door;
Negatur, there's logic to begin with you, mother.

---

[1] *Freshman* is the academical term for one who has newly entered the university, and is ignorant of its customs.

Maud. Run, call the gentleman, nurse; he's my son's tutor.— [*Exit* Nurse.
Here, eat some plums. [*Offers comfits.*
Tim. Come I from Cambridge,
And offer me six plums?
Maud. Why, how now, Tim?
Will not your old tricks yet be left?
Tim. Serv'd like a child,
When I have answer'd under bachelor!
Maud. You'll ne'er lin[1] till I make your tutor whip[2] you;
You know how I serv'd you once at the free-school
In Paul's Churchyard?
Tim. O monstrous absurdity!
Ne'er was the like in Cambridge since my time;
'Life, whip a bachelor! you'd be laugh'd at soundly;
Let not my tutor hear you, 'twould be a jest
Through the whole university. No more words, mother.

Re-enter Nurse *with* Tutor.

Maud. Is this your tutor, Tim?
Tutor. Yes, surely, lady,

---

[1] Cease.

[2] The whipping of undergraduates was no uncommon occurrence. Aubrey relates that Milton, when a student at Cambridge, was whipped by his tutor, William Chappell. Chamberlain, in a letter to Carleton (Feb. 12, 1612), writes:—"I know not whether you have heard . . . that a son of the Bishop of Bristol, his eldest, of nineteen or twenty, killed himself with a knife to avoid the disgrace of breeching, which his mother or mother-in-law (I know not whether) would need have put him to, for losing his money at tennis."

I am the man that brought him in league with logic,
And read the Dunces [1] to him.
Tim. That did he, mother;
But now I have 'em all in my own pate,
And can as well read 'em to others.
Tutor. That can he,
Mistress, for they flow naturally from him.
Maud. I am the more beholding to your pains, sir.
Tutor. *Non ideo sane.*
Maud. True, he was an idiot indeed
When he went out of London, but now he's well mended.
Did you receive the two goose-pies I sent you?
Tutor. And eat them heartily, thanks to your worship.
Maud. 'Tis my son Tim; I pray bid him welcome, gentlewomen.
Tim. Tim? hark you, Timotheus, mother, Timotheus.
Maud. How, shall I deny your name? Timotheus, quoth he!
Faith there's a name!—'Tis my son Tim, forsooth.
Lady Kix. You're welcome, master Tim.
[*Kisses* TIM.
Tim. O this is horrible,
She wets as she kisses! [*Aside.*]—Your handkercher, sweet tutor,
To wipe them off as fast as they come on.
Sec. Gos. Welcome from Cambridge. [*Kisses* TIM.
Tim. This is intolerable!
This woman has a villanous sweet breath,

[1] The schoolmen,—so called from Duns Scotus.

Did she not stink of cornfits. [*Aside.*]—Help me, sweet tutor,
Or I shall rub my lips off!
Tutor. I'll go kiss
The lower end the whilst.
Tim. Perhaps that's the sweeter,
And we shall despatch the sooner.
First Pur. Let me come next:
Welcome from the wellspring of discipline,
That waters all the brethren.
[*Attempts to kiss* TIM, *but reels and falls.*
Tim. Hoist, I beseech thee!
Third Gos. O bless the woman!—Mistress Underman—— [*They raise her up.*
First Pur. 'Tis but the common affliction of the faithful;
We must embrace our falls.
Tim. I'm glad I 'scap'd it;
It was some rotten kiss sure, it dropt down
Before it came at me.

Re-enter ALLWIT *with* DAVY.

Allwit. Here is a noise! not parted yet? hoida,
A looking-glass!—They've drunk so hard in plate,
That some of them had need of other vessels.— [*Aside*
Yonder's the bravest show!
Gossips. Where, where, sir?
Allwit. Come along presently by the Pissing-conduit,[1]

[1] Otherwise known as the "conduit in Cornhill." It was set up by John Wells, Mayor, in 1430.

With two brave drums and a standard-bearer.
Gossips. O brave!
Tim. Come, tutor. [*Exit with* Tutor.
Gossips. Farewell, sweet gossip!
Mis. All. I thank you all for your pains.
First Pur. Feed and grow strong.
[*Exeunt* LADY KIX, MAUDLIN, *and all the* Gossips.
Allwit. You had more need to sleep than eat;
Go take a nap with some of the brethren, go,
And rise up a well-edified, boldified sister.
O, here's a day of toil well pass'd over,
Able to make a citizen hare-mad!
How hot they've made the room with their thick bums!
Dost not feel it, Davy?
Davy. Monstrous strong, sir.
Allwit. What's here under the stools?
Davy. Nothing but wet, sir;
Some wine spilt here belike.
Allwit. Is't no worse, think'st thou?
Fair needlework stools cost nothing with them, Davy.
Davy. Nor you neither, i'faith. [*Aside.*
Allwit. Look how they have laid them,
E'en as they lie themselves, with their heels up!
How they have shuffled up the rushes[1] too, Davy,
With their short figging little shittle-cork[2] heels!
These women can let nothing stand as they find it.
But what's the secret thou'st about to tell me,
My honest Davy?

[1] See note, vol. i. p. 13.
[2] The old and genuine form of *shittle-cock*.

Davy. If you should disclose it, sir——
Allwit. 'Life, rip my belly up to the throat then, Davy!
Davy. My master's upon marriage.
Allwit. Marriage, Davy?
Send me to hanging rather.
Davy. I have stung him! [*Aside.*
Allwit. When? where? what is she, Davy?
Davy. Even the same was gossip, and gave the spoon.
Allwit. I have no time to stay, nor scarce can speak:
I'll stop those wheels, or all the work will break. [*Exit.*
Davy. I knew 'twould prick. Thus do I fashion still
All mine own ends by him and his rank toil:
'Tis my desire to keep him still from marriage;
Being his poor nearest kinsman, I may fare
The better at his death; there my hopes build,
Since my Lady Kix is dry, and hath no child. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Room in Sir OLIVER KIX'S *House.*

Enter TOUCHWOOD *senior and* TOUCHWOOD *junior.*

Touch. jun. You're in the happiest way t' enrich yourself
And pleasure me, brother, as man's feet can tread in;
For though she be lock'd up, her vow is fix'd
Only to me; then time shall never grieve me,
For by that vow e'en absent [I] enjoy her,
Assuredly confirm'd that none else shall,

Which will make tedious years seem gameful to me:
In the mean space, lose you no time, sweet brother;
You have the means to strike at this knight's fortunes,
And lay him level with his bankrout[1] merit;
Get but his wife with child, perch at tree-top,
And shake the golden fruit into her lap;
About it before she weep herself to a dry ground,
And whine out all her goodness.

Touch. sen. Prithee, cease;
I find a too much aptness in my blood
For such a business, without provocation;
You might well spar'd this banquet of eringoes,
Artichokes, potatoes, and your butter'd crab;[2]
They were fitter kept for your own wedding-dinner.

Touch. jun. Nay, and you'll follow my suit, and save my purse too,
Fortune doats on me: he's in happy case
Finds such an honest friend i' the common-place.[3]

Touch. sen. Life, what makes thee so merry? thou'st no cause
That I could hear of lately since thy crosses,
Unless there be news come with new additions.

Touch. jun. Why, there thou hast it right; I look for her
This evening, brother.

---

[1] The old form of *bankrupt*.

[2] Cf. Marston's *Scourge of Villainy*:—

"A crab's baked guts, a lobster's butter'd thigh,
I hear them swear is blood for venery."

[3] See note, vol. i. p. 259.

Touch. sen. How's that? look for her?
Touch. jun. I will deliver you of the wonder straight, brother:
By the firm secrecy and kind assistance
Of a good wench i' the house, who, made of pity,
Weighing the case her own, she's led through gutters,
Strange hidden ways, which none but love could find,
Or ha' the heart to venture: I expect her
Where you would little think.
Touch. sen. I care not where,
So she be safe, and yours.
Touch. jun. Hope tells me so;
But from your love and time my peace must grow.
Touch. sen. You know the worst then, brother.
[*Exit* TOUCHWOOD *jun.*]—Now to my Kix,
The barren he and she; they're i' the next room;
But to say which of their two humours hold them
Now at this instant, I cannot say truly.
Sir Ol. [*within.*] Thou liest, barrenness!
Touch. sen. O, is't that time of day? give you joy of your tongue,
There's nothing else good in you: this their life
The whole day, from eyes open to eyes shut,
Kissing or scolding, and then must be made friends;
Then rail the second part of the first fit out,
And then be pleas'd again, no man knows which way:
Fall out like giants, and fall in like children;
Their fruit can witness as much.

Enter Sir OLIVER KIX *and* LADY KIX.

Sir Ol. 'Tis thy fault.
Lady Kix. Mine? drouth and coldness!
Sir Ol. Thine; 'tis thou art barren.
Lady Kix. I barren? O life, that I durst but speak now
In mine own justice, in mine own right! I barren?
'Twas otherwise with me when I was at court;
I was ne'er called so till I was married.
Sir Ol. I'll be divorc'd.
Lady Kix. Be hang'd! I need not wish it,
That will come too soon to thee: I may say
Marriage and hanging goes by destiny,
For all the goodness I can find in't yet.
Sir Ol. I'll give up house, and keep some fruitful whore,
Like an old bachelor, in a tradesman's chamber;
She and her children shall have all.
Lady Kix. Where be they?
Touch. sen. Pray, cease;
When there are friendlier courses took for you,
To get and multiply within your house
At your own proper costs, in spite of censure,
Methinks an honest peace might be establish'd.
Sir Ol. What, with her? never.
Touch. sen. Sweet sir——
Sir Ol. You work all in vain.
Lady Kix. Then he doth all like thee.
Touch. sen. Let me entreat, sir——

Sir Ol. Singleness confound her!
I took her with one smock.
Lady Kix. But, indeed, you
Came not so single when you came from shipboard.
Sir Ol. Heart, she bit sore there! [*Aside.*]—Prithee, make us friends.
Touch. sen. Is't come to that? the peal begins to cease. [*Aside.*
Sir Ol. I'll sell all at an out-cry.[1]
Lady Kix. Do thy worst, slave!—
Good, sweet sir, bring us into love again.
Touch. sen. Some would think this impossible to compass.— [*Aside.*
Pray, let this storm fly over.
Sir Ol. Good sir, pardon me;
I'm master of this house, which I'll sell presently;
I'll clap up bills this evening.
Touch. sen. Lady, friends, come!
Lady Kix. If ever ye lov'd woman, talk not on't, sir:
What, friends with him? good faith, do you think I'm mad?
With one that's scarce th' hinder quarter of a man?
Sir Ol. Thou art nothing of a woman.
Lady Kix. Would I were less than nothing! [*Weeps.*
Sir Ol. Nay, prithee, what dost mean?
Lady Kix. I cannot please you.
Sir Ol. I'faith, thou'rt a good soul; he lies that says it;
Buss, buss, pretty rogue. [*Kisses her.*

[1] Auction.

Lady Kix. You care not for me.
Touch. sen. Can any man tell now which way they came in?
By this light, I'll be hang'd then! [*Aside.*
Sir Ol. Is the drink come!
Touch. sen. Here is a little vial of almond-milk,
That stood me in some threepence. [*Aside.*
Sir Ol. I hope to see thee, wench, within these few years,
Circled with children, pranking up a girl,
And putting jewels in her[1] little ears;
Fine sport, i'faith!
Lady Kix. Ay, had you been ought, husband,
It had been done ere this time.
Sir Ol. Had I been ought?
Hang thee, hadst thou been ought! but a cross thing
I ever found thee.
Lady Kix. Thou'rt a grub, to say so.
Sir Ol. A pox on thee!
Touch. sen. By this light, they're out again
At the same door, and no man can tell which way! [*Aside.*
Come, here's your drink, sir.
Sir Ol. I'll not take it now, sir,
And I were sure to get three boys ere midnight.
Lady Kix. Why, there thou show'st now of what breed thou com'st
To hinder generation: O thou villain,

[1] Old ed. "their."

That knows how crookedly the world goes with us
For want of heirs, yet put by all good fortune!

Sir Ol. Hang, strumpet! I will take it now in spite.

Touch. sen. Then you must ride upon't five hours.
[*Gives vial to* Sir OLIVER.

Sir Ol. I mean so.—
Within there!

Enter Servant.

Ser. Sir?

Sir Ol. Saddle the white mare: [*Exit* Servant.
I'll take a whore along, and ride to Ware.

Lady Kix. Ride to the devil!

Sir Ol. I'll plague you every way:
Look ye, do you see? 'tis gone. [*Drinks.*

Lady Kix. A pox go with it!

Sir Ol. Ay, curse, and spare not now.

Touch. sen. Stir up and down, sir;
You must not stand.

Sir Ol. Nay, I'm not given to standing.

Touch. sen. So much the better, sir, for the——

Sir Ol. I never could stand long in one place yet;
I learnt it of my father, ever figient.[1]
How if I cross'd this, sir? [*Capers.*

Touch. sen. O, passing good, sir,
And would show well a' horseback: when you come to your inn,

---

[1] Fidgety.

If you leapt over a joint-stool or two,
'Twere not amiss—although you brake your neck, sir.
[*Aside.*
Sir Ol. What say you to a table thus high, sir?
Touch. sen. Nothing better, sir, if't be furnish'd with good victuals.
You remember how the bargain runs 'bout this business?
Sir Ol. Or else I had a bad head: you must receive, sir,
Four hundred pounds of me at four several payments;
One hundred pound now in hand.
Touch. sen. Right, that I have, sir.
Sir Ol. Another hundred when my wife[1] is quick;
The third when she's brought a-bed; and the last hundred
When the child cries, for if't should be still-born,
It doth no good, sir.
Touch. sen. All this is even still:
A little faster, sir.
Sir Ol. Not a whit, sir;
I'm in an excellent pace for any physic.

Re-enter Servant.

Ser. Your white mare's ready.
Sir Ol. I shall up presently.— [*Exit* Servant.
One kiss and farewell. [*Kisses her.*
Lady Kix. Thou shalt have two, love.
Sir Ol. Expect me about three.

[1] Old ed. "wifes."

Lady Kix. With all my heart, sweet.

[*Exit* Sir OLIVER KIX.

Touch. sen. By this light, they've forgot their anger since,
And are as far in again as e'er they were!
Which way the devil came they? heart, I saw 'em not!
Their ways are beyond finding out. [*Aside.*]—Come, sweet lady.

Lady Kix. How must I take mine, sir?

Touch. sen. Clean contrary;
Yours must be taken lying.

Lady Kix. A-bed, sir?

Touch. sen. A-bed, or where you will, for your own ease;
Your coach will serve.

Lady Kix. The physic must needs please. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A Room in YELLOWHAMMER'S *House.*

Enter TIM *and* Tutor.

Tim. Negatur argumentum, tutor.

Tutor. Probo tibi, pupil, *stultus non est animal rationale.*

Tim. Falleris sane.

Tutor. Quæso ut taceas,—probo tibi——

Tim. Quomodo probas, domine?

Tutor. Stultus non habet rationem, ergo non est animal rationale.

Tim. Sic argumentaris, domine; stultus non habet rationem, ergo non est animal rationale; negatur argumentum again, tutor.

Tutor. Argumentum iterum probo tibi, domine; qui non participat de ratione, nullo modo potest vocari rationalis;[1] but *stultus non participat de ratione, ergo stultus nullo modo potest dici*[2] *rationalis.*

Tim. Participat.

Tutor. Sic disputas; qui participat, quomodo participat?

Tim. Ut homo, probabo tibi in syllogismo.

---

[1] Old ed. "rationalibus."

[2] Old ed. "dicere."

Tutor. Hunc proba.

Tim. Sic probo, domine; stultus est homo, sicut tu et ego sum[us]; homo est animal rationale, sicut stultus est animal rationale.

Enter MAUDLIN.

Maud. Here's nothing but disputing all the day long with 'em!

Tutor. Sic disputas; stultus est homo, sicut tu et ego sum[us]; homo est animal rationale, sicut stultus est animal rationale.

Maud. Your reasons are both good, whate'er they be.
Pray, give them over; faith, you'll tire yourselves;
What's the matter between you?

Tim. Nothing but reasoning
About a fool, mother.

Maud. About a fool, son?
Alas, what need you trouble your heads 'bout that!
None of us all but knows what a fool is.

Tim. Why, what's a fool, mother? I come to you now.

Maud. Why, one that's married before he has wit.

Tim. 'Tis pretty, i'faith, and well guessed of a woman never brought up at the university; but bring forth what fool you will, mother, I'll prove him to be as reasonable a creature as myself or my tutor here.

Maud. Fie, 'tis impossible!

Tutor. Nay, he shall do't, forsooth.

Tim. 'Tis the easiest thing to prove a fool by logic;
By logic I'll prove anything.

Maud. What, thou wilt not?
Tim. I'll prove a whore to be an honest woman.
Maud. Nay, by my faith, she must prove that herself,
Or logic will ne'er do't.
Tim. 'Twill do't, I tell you.
Maud. Some in this street would give a thousand pounds
That you could prove their wives so.
Tim. Faith, I can,
And all their daughters too, though they had three bastards.
When comes your tailor hither?
Maud. Why, what of him?
Tim. By logic I'll prove him to be a man,
Let him come when he will.
Maud. How hard at first
Was learning to him! truly, sir, I thought
He would never 'a took the Latin tongue:
How many accidences do you think he wore out
Ere he came to his grammar?
Tutor. Some three or four.
Maud. Believe me, sir, some four and thirty.
Tim. Pish, I made haberdines[1] of 'em in church-porches.
Maud. He was eight years in his grammar, and stuck horribly
At a foolish place there, call'd *as in præsenti.*

[1] "Perhaps Tim alludes to some childish sport: a kind of cod, generally salted, was called *haberdine.*"—*Dyce.*

Tim. Pox, I have it here now.
Maud. He so sham'd me once,
Before an honest gentleman that knew me
When I was a maid.
Tim. These women must have all out!
Maud. *Quid est grammatica?* says the gentleman to him,—
I shall remember by a sweet, sweet token,—
But nothing could he answer.
Tutor. How now, pupil, ha?
Quid est grammatica?
Tim. *Grammatica?* ha, ha, ha!
Maud. Nay, do not laugh, son, but let me hear you say't now:
There was one word went so prettily off
The gentleman's tongue, I shall remember it
The longest day of my life.
Tutor. Come, *quid est grammatica?*
Tim. Are you not asham'd, tutor, *grammatica?*
Why, *recte scribendi atque loquendi ars,*
Sir-reverence[1] of my mother.
Maud. That was it, i'faith: why now, son,
I see you're a deep scholar:—and, master tutor,
A word, I pray; let us withdraw a little
Into my husband's chamber; I'll send in
The North Wales gentlewoman to him, she looks for wooing:
I'll put together both, and lock the door.

[1] A corruption of *save reverence.*

Tutor. I give great approbation to your conclusion.

[*Exeunt* MAUDLIN *and* Tutor.

Tim. I mar'l[1] what this gentlewoman should be
That I should have in marriage; she's a stranger to me;
I wonder what my parents mean, i'faith,
To match me with a stranger so,
A maid that's neither kiff[2] nor kin to me:
'Life, do they think I've no more care of my body
Than to lie with one that I ne'er knew, a mere stranger,
One that ne'er went to school with me neither,
Nor ever play-fellows together?
They're mightily o'erseen in it, methinks.
They say she has mountains to her marriage,
She's full of cattle, some two thousand runts:
Now, what the meaning of these runts[3] should be,
My tutor cannot tell me; I have look'd
In Rider's Dictionary[4] for the letter R,
And there I can hear no tidings of these runts neither;
Unless they should be Romford hogs, I know them not.

Enter Welshwoman.

And here she comes. If I know what to say to her now
In the way of marriage, I'm no graduate:

---

[1] Marvel.
[2] A corruption of "kith."
[3] Cattle (of small size).
[4] An English-Latin and Latin-English Dictionary by John Rider, Bishop of Killaloe, originally published in 1589, and frequently reprinted in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Methinks, i'faith, 'tis boldly done of her
To come into my chamber, being but a stranger;
She shall not say I am so proud yet but
I'll speak to her: marry, as I will order it,
She shall take no hold of my words, I'll warrant her.
[Welshwoman *curtsies.*
She looks and makes a curtsy.—
Salve tu quoque, puella pulcherrima; quid vis nescio nec sane curo,—
Tully's own phrase to a heart.

Welsh. I know not what he means: a suitor, quoth'a?
I hold my life he understands no English. [*Aside.*

Tim. Fertur, mehercule, tu virgo, Wallià ut opibus abundas[1] *maximis.*

Welsh. What's this *fertur* and *abundundis?*
He mocks me sure, and calls me a bundle of farts.

Tim. I have no Latin word now for their runts;
I'll make some shift or other: [*Aside.*
Iterum dico, opibus abundas[2] *maximis, montibus, et fontibus et ut ita dicam rontibus; attamen vero homunculus ego sum natura, simul*[3] *et arte baccalaureus, lecto profecto non parato.*

Welsh. This is most strange: may be he can speak Welsh.—
Avedera whee comrage, der due cog foginis.

Tim. Cog foggin? I scorn to cog with her; I'll tell

---

[1] Old ed. "abundis." [2] Old ed. "abundat."
[3] "Old ed. 'simule . . . parata.' I am by no means satisfied with my alterations; indeed, I do not quite understand the drift of Tim's oration."—*Dyce.*

her so too in a word near her own language.—*Ego non cogo.*

Welsh. Rhegosin a whiggin harle ron corid ambro.

Tim. By my faith, she's a good scholar, I see that already;
She has the tongues plain; I hold my life sh'as travell'd:
What will folks say? there goes the learned couple!
Faith, if the truth were known, she hath proceeded.[1]

Re-enter MAUDLIN.

Maud. How now? how speeds your business?

Tim. I'm glad
My mother's come to part us. [*Aside.*

Maud. How do you agree, forsooth?

Welsh. As well as e'er we did before we met.

Maud. How's that?

Welsh. You put me to a man I understand not;
Your son's no Englishman, methinks.

Maud. No Englishman?
Bless my boy, and born i' the heart of London!

Welsh. I ha' been long enough in the chamber with him,
And I find neither Welsh nor English in him.

Maud. Why, Tim, how have you us'd the gentlewoman?

Tim. As well as a man might do, mother, in modest Latin.

Maud. Latin, fool?

[1] Taken a degree.

Tim. And she recoil'd in Hebrew.
Maud. In Hebrew, fool? 'tis Welsh.
Tim. All comes to one, mother.
Maud. She can speak English too.
Tim. Who told me so much?
Heart, and she can speak English, I'll clap to her;
I thought you'd marry me to a stranger.
Maud. You must forgive him; he's so inur'd to Latin
He and his tutor, that he hath quite forgot
To use the Protestant tongue.
Welsh. 'Tis quickly pardon'd, forsooth.
Maud. Tim, make amends and kiss her.—
He makes towards you, forsooth.
Tim. O delicious!
One may discover her country by her kissing:
'Tis a true saying, there's nothing tastes so sweet
As your Welsh mutton.—'Twas reported you could sing.
Maud. O rarely, Tim, the sweetest British songs!
Tim. And 'tis my mind, I swear, before I marry,
I would see all my wife's good parts at once,
To view how rich I were.
Maud. Thou shalt hear sweet music, Tim.—
Pray, forsooth.
Welsh. [*sings.*][1]

Cupid[2] *is Venus' only joy,*
But he is a wanton boy,

---

[1] "Old ed. 'Musicke and Welche Song,' the words probably being adapted to some Welsh air."—*Dyce.*

[2] The first nine lines of this song, with two additional lines, occur in *More Dissemblers besides Women*, act i. sc. 4.

A very, very wanton boy;
He shoots at ladies' naked breasts,
He is the cause of most men's crests,
I mean upon the forehead,
Invisible but horrid;
'Twas he first thought,[1] *upon the way*
To keep a lady's lips in play.

Why should not Venus chide her son
For the pranks that he hath done,
The wanton pranks that he hath done?
He shoots his fiery darts so thick,
They hurt poor ladies to the quick,
Ah me, with cruel wounding!
His darts are so confounding,
That life and sense would soon decay,
But that he keeps their lips in play.

Can there be any part of bliss
In a quickly fleeting kiss,
A quickly fleeting kiss?
To one's pleasure leisures are but waste,
The slowest kiss makes too much haste,
And lose it ere we find it:
The pleasing sport they only know
That close above and close below.

Tim. I would not change my wife for a kingdom: I can do somewhat too in my own lodging. [*Sings.*[2]

[1] Old ed. "taught;" but "thought" is the reading in *More Dissemblers.*

[2] I have added this stage-direction as it seems to be necessary.

Enter YELLOWHAMMER *and* ALLWIT.

Yel. Why, well said, Tim! the bells go merrily;
I love such peals a' life.[1]—Wife, lead them in awhile;
Here's a strange gentleman desires private conference.—
[*Exeunt* MAUDLIN, Welshwoman, *and* TIM.
You're welcome, sir, the more for your name's sake,
Good master Yellowhammer: I love my name well:
And which o' the Yellowhammers take you descent from,
If I may be so bold with you? which, I pray?

Allwit. The Yellowhammers in Oxfordshire, near Abingdon.

Yel. And those are the best Yellowhammers, and truest bred;
I came from thence myself, though now a citizen:
I will be bold with you; you are most welcome.

Allwit. I hope the zeal I bring with me shall deserve it.

Yel. I hope no less: what is your will, sir?

Allwit. I understand, by rumours, you've a daughter,
Which my bold love shall henceforth title cousin.

Yel. I thank you for her, sir.

Allwit. I heard of her virtues
And other confirmed graces.

Yel. A plaguy girl, sir!

Allwit. Fame sets her out with richer ornaments
Than you are pleas'd to boast of; 'tis done modestly:
I hear she's towards marriage.

[1] As my life.

Yel. You hear truth, sir.
Allwit. And with a knight in town, Sir Walter Whorehound.
Yel. The very same, sir.
Allwit. I'm the sorrier for't.
Yel. The sorrier? why, cousin?
Allwit. 'Tis not too far past, is't?
It may be yet recall'd?
Yel. Recall'd! why, good sir?
Allwit. Resolve[1] me in that point, ye shall hear from me.
Yel. There's no contract past.
Allwit. I'm very joyful, sir.
Yel. But he's the man must bed her.
Allwit. By no means, coz;
She's quite undone then, and you'll curse the time
That e'er you made the match; he's an arrant whoremaster,
Consumes his time and state——[2]
Whom in my knowledge he hath kept this seven years;
Náy, coz, another man's wife too.
Yel. O, abominable!
Allwit. Maintains the whole house, apparels the husband,
Pays servants' wages, not so much, but——[2]
Yel. Worse and worse; and doth the husband know this?

[1] Satisfy.
[2] So the old ed.

Allwit. Knows? ay, and glad he may too, 'tis his living;
As other trades thrive, butchers by selling flesh,
Poulters by vending conies, or the like, coz.
Yel. What an incomparable wittol's this!
Allwit. Tush, what cares he for that? believe me, coz,
No more than I do.
Yel. What a base slave's that!
Allwit. All's one to him; he feeds and takes his ease,
Was ne'er the man that ever broke his sleep
To get a child yet, by his own confession,
And yet his wife has seven.
Yel. What, by sir Walter?
Allwit. Sir Walter's like to keep 'em and maintain 'em
In excellent fashion; he dares do no less, sir.
Yel. 'Life, has he children too?
Allwit. Children! boys thus high,
In their Cato[1] and Corderius.[2]
Yel. What? you jest, sir?
Allwit. Why, one can make a verse, and's now at Eton College.
Yel. O, this news has cut into my heart, coz!
Allwit. 'Thad eaten nearer, if it had not been prevented:
One Allwit's wife.

---

[1] Dionysius Cato's *Disticha de Moribus* was a famous old school-book.

[2] Old ed. "Cordelius." Mathurin Cordier (Corderius) was a French schoolmaster of the sixteenth century. His *Colloquia* passed through numberless editions.

Yel. Allwit! 'foot, I have heard of him;
He had a girl kursen'd[1] lately?
Allwit. Ay, that work
Did cost the knight above a hundred mark.
Yel. I'll mark him for a knave and villain for't;
A thousand thanks and blessings! I have done with him.
Allwit. Ha, ha, ha! this knight will stick by my ribs still;
I shall not lose him yet; no wife will come;
Where'er he woos, I find him still at home:
Ha, ha! [*Aside, and exit.*
Yel. Well, grant all this, say now his deeds are black,
Pray, what serves marriage but to call him back?
I've kept a whore myself, and had a bastard
By mistress Anne, in *anno* ——[2]
I care not who knows it; he's now a jolly fellow,
Has been twice warden; so may his fruit be,
They were but base begot, and so was he.
The knight is rich, he shall be my son-in-law;
No matter, so the whore he keeps be wholesome,
My daughter takes no hurt then; so let them wed:
I'll have him sweat well ere they go to bed.

Re-enter MAUDLIN.

Maud. O husband, husband!
Yel. How now, Maudlin?
Maud. We are all undone; she's gone, she's gone!

[1] Christened. [2] So the old ed.

Yel. Again? death, which way?
Maud. Over the houses: lay[1] the water-side,
She's gone for ever else.
Yel. O venturous baggage! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Another Room in YELLOWHAMMER'S *House.*

Enter TIM *and* Tutor *severally.*

Tim. Thieves, thieves! my sister's stolen: some thief hath got her:
O how miraculously did my father's plate 'scape!
'Twas all left out, tutor.
Tutor. Is't possible?
Tim. Besides three chains of pearl and a box of coral.
My sister's gone; let's look at Trig-stairs for her;
My mother's gone to lay the common stairs
At Puddle-wharf; and at the dock below
Stands my poor silly father; run, sweet tutor, run!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Street by the Thames.

Enter TOUCHWOOD *senior and* TOUCHWOOD *junior.*

Touch. sen. I had been taken, brother, by eight sergeants,

[1] See note 3, vol. ii. p. 257.

But for the honest watermen ; I'm bound to them ;
They are the most requitefull'st people living,
For as they get their means by gentlemen,
They're still the forwardest to help gentlemen :
You heard how one 'scaped out of the Blackfriars,[1]
But a while since, from two or three varlets came
Into the house with all their rapiers drawn,
As if they'd dance the sword-dance[2] on the stage,
With candles in their hands, like chandlers' ghosts ;
Whilst the poor gentleman so pursu'd and banded,
Was by an honest pair of oars safely landed.

Touch. jun. I love them with my heart for't !

Enter several Watermen.

First W. Your first man, sir.

Sec. W. Shall I carry you, gentlemen, with a pair of oars ?

Touch. sen. These be the honest fellows : take one pair,
And leave the rest for her.

Touch. jun. Barn Elms.

Touch. sen. No more, brother. [*Exit.*

First W. Your first man.

Sec. W. Shall I carry your worship ?

Touch. jun. Go ; and you honest watermen that stay,

---

[1] The theatre at Blackfriars.

[2] Sword-dancing was a Christmas pastime peculiar to the North of England. It is described in Brand's *Popular Antiquities.*

Here's a French crown for you [*gives money*]: there comes a maid
With all speed to take water, row her lustily
To Barn Elms after me.

Sec. W. To Barn Elms, good, sir.—
Make ready the boat, Sam; we'll wait below.

[*Exeunt* Watermen.

Enter MOLL.

Touch. jun. What made you stay so long?

Moll. I found the way more dangerous than I look'd for.

Touch. jun. Away, quick; there's a boat waits for you; and I'll
Take water at Paul's wharf, and overtake you.

Moll. Good sir, do; we cannot be too safe. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Sir WALTER WHOREHOUND, YELLOWHAMMER, TIM, *and* Tutor.

Sir Wal. Life, call you this close keeping?

Yel. She was kept
Under a double lock.

Sir Wal. A double devil!

Tim. That's a buff sergeant, tutor; he'll ne'er wear out.

Yel. How would you have women lock'd?

Tim. With padlocks, father;
The Venetian uses it; my tutor reads it.

Sir Wal. Heart, if she were so lock'd up, how got she out?

Yel. There was a little hole look'd into the gutter;
But who would have dreamt of that?
Sir Wal. A wiser man would.
Tim. He says true, father; a wise man for love
Will seek every hole; my tutor knows it.
Tutor. Verum poeta dicit.
Tim. Dicit Virgilius, father.
Yel. Prithee, talk of thy gills[1] somewhere else; sh'as play'd
The gill with me: where's your wise mother now?
Tim. Run mad, I think; I thought she would have drown'd herself;
She would not stay for oars, but took a smelt-boat;
Sure I think she be gone a-fishing for her.
Yel. She'll catch a goodly dish of gudgeons now,
Will serve us all to supper.

Enter MAUDLIN, *drawing in* MOLL *by the hair, and* Watermen.

Maud. I'll tug thee home by the hair.
First W. Good mistress, spare her!
Maud. Tend your own business.
First W. You're a cruel mother.
[*Exeunt* Watermen.
Moll. O, my heart dies!
Maud. I'll make thee an example
For all the neighbours' daughters.
Moll. Farewell, life!

[1] Wanton women.

Maud. You that have tricks can counterfeit.
Yel. Hold, hold, Maudlin!
Maud. I've brought your jewel by the hair.
Yel. She's here, knight.
Sir Wal. Forbear, or I'll grow worse.
Tim. Look on her, tutor;
She hath brought her from the water like a mermaid;
She's but half my sister now, as far as the flesh goes,
The rest may be sold to fishwives.
Maud. Dissembling, cunning baggage!
Yel. Impudent strumpet!
Sir Wal. Either give over, both, or I'll give over.—
Why have you us'd me thus unkind[ly], mistress?
Wherein have I deserv'd?
Yel. You talk too fondly, sir:
We'll take another course and prevent all:
We might have done't long since; we'll lose no time now,
Nor trust to't any longer: to-morrow morn,
As early as sunrise, we'll have you join'd.
Moll. O, bring me death to-night, love-pitying fates;
Let me not see to-morrow up on[1] the world!
Yel. Are you content, sir? till then she shall be watch'd.
Maud. Baggage, you shall.
Tim. Why, father, my tutor and I
Will both watch in armour.
[*Exeunt* MAUDLIN, MOLL, *and* YELLOWHAMMER.
Tutor. How shall we do for weapons?

[1] Old ed. "vp vpon."

Tim. Take you
No care for that; if need be, I can send
For conquering metal, tutor, ne'er lost day yet,
'Tis but at Westminster; I am acquainted
With him that keeps the monuments; I can borrow
Harry the Fifth's sword; it will serve us both
To watch with. [*Exeunt* TIM *and* Tutor.
Sir Wal. I never was so near my wish
As this chance makes me: ere to-morrow noon
I shall receive two thousand pound in gold,
And a sweet maidenhead worth forty.

Re-enter TOUCHWOOD *junior and* Waterman.

Touch. jun. O, thy news splits me!
Water. Half-drown'd, she cruelly tugg'd her by the hair,
Forc'd her disgracefully, not like a mother.
Touch. jun. Enough; leave me, like my joys.—
[*Exit* Waterman.
Sir, saw you not a wretched maid pass this way?
Heart, villain, is it thou?
Sir Wal. Yes, slave, 'tis I.
Touch. jun. I must break through thee then: there is no stop
That checks my tongue[1] and all my hopeful fortunes,
That breast excepted, and I must have way.
Sir Wal. Sir, I believe 'twill hold your life in play.

[1] "*i.e.*, perhaps, suit—if it be not a misprint."—*Dyce.*

Touch. jun. Sir, you will gain the heart in my breast first.[1]

Sir Wal. There is no dealing then; think on the dowry

For two thousand pounds. [*They fight.*

Touch. jun. O, now 'tis quit, sir.

Sir Wal. And being of even hand, I'll play no longer.

Touch. jun. No longer, slave?

Sir Wal. I've certain things to think on,
Before I dare go further.

Touch. jun. But one bout!
I'll follow thee to death, but ha' it out. [*Exeunt.*

[1] Old ed. "at first."

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A Room in ALLWIT'S *House.*

Enter ALLWIT, MISTRESS ALLWIT, *and* DAVY.

Mis. All. A misery of a house!
Allwit. What shall become of us!
Davy. I think his wound be mortal.
Allwit. Think'st thou so, Davy?
Then am I mortal too, but a dead man, Davy;
This is no world for me, whene'er he goes;
I must e'en truss up all, and after him, Davy;
A sheet with two knots, and away.
Davy. O see, sir!

Enter Sir WALTER WHOREHOUND *led in by two* Servants, *who place him in a chair.*

How faint he goes! two of my fellows lead him.
Mis. All. O me! [*Swoons.*
Allwit. Heyday, my wife's laid down too; here's like to be
A good house kept, when we're all together down:

Take pains with her, good Davy, cheer her up there;
Let me come to his worship, let me come.
Sir Wal. Touch me not, villain; my wound aches at thee,
Thou poison to my heart!
Allwit. He raves already;
His senses are quite gone, he knows me not.—
Look up, an't like your worship; heave those eyes,
Call me to mind; is your remembrance left?
Look in my face; who am I, an't like your worship?
Sir Wal. If anything be worse than slave or villain,
Thou art the man!
Allwit. Alas, his poor worship's weakness!
He will begin to know me by little and little.
Sir Wal. No devil can be like thee!
Allwit. Ah, poor gentleman.
Methinks the pain that thou endurest [mads thee].[1]
Sir Wal. Thou know'st me to be wicked; for thy baseness
Kept the eyes open still on all my sins;
None knew the dear account my soul stood charg'd with
So well as thou, yet, like hell's flattering angel,
Wouldst never tell me on't, lett'st me go on,
And join with death in sleep; that if I had not
Wak'd now by chance, even by a stranger's pity,
I had everlastingly slept out all hope
Of grace and mercy.

[1] The bracketed words were added by Dyce.

Allwit. Now he's worse and worse.
Wife, to him, wife; thou wast wont to do good on him.
Mis. All. How is it with you, sir?
Sir Wal. Not as with you,
Thou loathsome strumpet! Some good, pitying man,
Remove my sins out of my sight a little;
I tremble to behold her, she keeps back
All comfort while she stays. Is this a time,
Unconscionable woman, to see thee?
Art thou so cruel to the peace of man,
Not to give liberty now? the devil himself
Shows a far fairer reverence and respect
To goodness than thyself; he dares not do this,
But part[s] in time of penitence, hides his face;
When man withdraws from him, he leaves the place:
Hast thou less manners and more impudence
Than thy instructor? prithee, show thy modesty,
If the least grain be left, and get thee from me:
Thou shouldst be rather lock'd many rooms hence
From the poor miserable sight of me,
If either love or grace had part in thee.
Mis. All. He's lost for ever! [*Aside.*
Allwit. Run, sweet Davy, quickly,
And fetch the children hither; sight of them
Will make him cheerful straight. [*Exit* DAVY.
Sir Wal. O death! is this
A place for you to weep? what tears are those!
Get you away with them, I shall fare the worse
As long as they're a-weeping, they work against me;
There's nothing but thy appetite in that sorrow,

Thou weep'st for lust; I feel it in the slackness
Of comforts coming towards me; I was well
Till thou begann'st t' undo me: this shows like
The fruitless sorrow of a careless mother,
That brings her son with dalliance to the gallows,
And then stands by and weeps to see him suffer.

Re-enter DAVY *with* NICK, WAT, *and other children.*

Davy. There are the children, sir, an't like your worship,
Your last fine girl; in troth, she smiles [on you];
Look, look, in faith, sir.

Sir Wal. O my vengeance!
Let me for ever hide my cursed face
From sight of those that darkens all my hopes,
And stands between me and the sight of heaven!
Who sees me now—O, O,[1]—and those so near me,
May rightly say I am o'ergrown with sin.
O, how my offences wrestle with my repentance!
It hath scarce breath;
Still my adulterous guilt hovers aloft,
And with her black wings beats down all my prayers
Ere they be half-way up. What's he knows now
How long I have to live? O, what comes then?
My taste grows bitter; the round world all gall now;
Her pleasing pleasures now hath poison'd me,

[1] Old ed. "*do to* and those," &c.—Probably my reading is not correct, but I dislike Dyce's "O too."

Which I exchang'd my soul for:
Make way a hundred sighs at once for me!
Allwit. Speak to him, Nick.
Nick. I dare not, I'm afraid.
Allwit. Tell him he hurts his wounds, Wat, with making moan.
Sir Wal. Wretched, death of seven![1]
Allwit. Come let's be talking
Somewhat to keep him alive. Ah, sirrah Wat,
And did my lord bestow that jewel on thee
For an epistle thou mad'st in Latin? thou
Art a good forward boy, there's great joy on thee.
Sir Wal. O sorrow!
Allwit. Heart, will nothing comfort him? 90
If he be so far gone, 'tis time to moan. [*Aside.*
Here's pen and ink, and paper, and all things ready;
Will't please your worship for to make your will?
Sir Wal. My will! yes, yes, what else? who writes apace now?
Allwit. That can your man Davy, an't like your worship;
A fair, fast, legible hand.
Sir Wal. Set it down then. [DAVY *writes.*
Imprimis, I bequeath to yonder wittol
Three times his weight in curses.
Allwit. How!
Sir Wal. All plagues
Of body and of mind.

[1] His seven children by Mistress Allwit.

Allwit. Write them not down, Davy.
Davy. It is his will; I must.
Sir Wal. Together also
With such a sickness ten days ere his death.
Allwit. There's a sweet legacy! I'm almost chok'd with't. [*Aside.*
Sir Wal. Next, I bequeath to that foul whore his wife
All barrenness of joy, a drouth of virtue,
And dearth of all repentance: for her end,
The common misery of an English strumpet,
In French and Dutch; beholding, ere she dies,
Confusion of her brats before her eyes,
And never shed a tear for't.

Enter Third Servant.

Third Ser. Where's the knight?—
O sir, the gentleman you wounded is
Newly departed!
Sir Wal. Dead? lift, lift, who helps me?
Allwit. Let the law lift you now, that must have all;
I have done lifting on you, and my wife too.
Third Ser. You were best lock yourself close.
Allwit. Not in my house, sir;
I'll harbour no such persons as men-slayers;
Lock yourself where you will.
Sir Wal. What's this?
Mis. All. Why, husband!
Allwit. I know what I do, wife.
Mis. All. You cannot tell yet;

For having kill'd the man in his defence,
Neither his life nor estate will be touch'd, husband.
Allwit. Away, wife! hear a fool! his lands will hang him.
Sir Wal. Am I denied a chamber?—What say you, forsooth?
Mis. All. Alas, sir, I am one that would have all well,
But must obey my husband.—Prithee, love,
Let the poor gentleman stay, being so sore wounded:
There's a close chamber at one end of the garret
We never use; let him have that, I prithee.
Allwit. We never use? you forgot sickness then,
And physic-times; is't not a place for easement?
Sir Wal. O, death! do I hear this with part
Of former life in me?—

Enter Fourth Servant.

What's the news now?
Fourth Ser. Troth, worse and worse; you're like to lose your land,
If the law save your life, sir, or the surgeon.
Allwit. Hark you there, wife.
Sir Wal. Why, how, sir?
Fourth Ser. Sir Oliver Kix's wife is new quicken'd;
That child undoes you, sir.
Sir Wal. All ill at once!
Allwit. I wonder what he makes here with his consorts?
Cannot our house be private to ourselves,
But we must have such guests? I pray, depart, sirs,

And take your murderer along with you;
Good he were apprehended ere he go,
Has kill'd some honest gentleman; send for officers.
Sir Wal. I'll soon save you that labour.
Allwit. I must tell you, sir,
You have been somewhat bolder in my house
Than I could well like of; I suffer'd you
Till it stuck here at my heart; I tell you truly
I thought y'had been familiar with my wife once.
Mis. All. With me! I'll see him hang'd first; I defy him,
And all such gentlemen in the like extremity.
Sir Wal. If ever eyes were open, these are they:
Gamesters, farewell, I've nothing left to play.
Allwit. And therefore get you gone, sir.
[*Exit* Sir WALTER, *led off by* Servants.
Davy. Of all wittols
Be thou the head—thou the grand whore of spittles!
[*Exit.*
Allwit. So, since he's like now to be rid of all,
I am right glad I'm so well rid of him.
Mis. All. I knew he durst not stay when you nam'd officers.
Allwit. That stopp'd his spirits straight. What shall we do now, wife?
Mis. All. As we were wont to do.
Allwit. We're richly furnish'd, wife,
With household stuff.
Mis. All. Let's let out lodgings then,
And take a house in the Strand.

Allwit. In troth, a match, wench!
We're simply stock'd with cloth-of-tissue cushions
To furnish out bay-windows; push, what not
That's quaint and costly, from the top to the bottom;
Life, for furniture we may lodge a countess:
There's a close-stool of tawny velvet too,
Now I think on it, wife.
Mis. All. There's that should be, sir;
Your nose must be in every thing.
Allwit. I've done, wench;
And let this stand in every gallant's chamber,—
There is no gamester like a politic sinner,
For whoe'er games, the box is sure a winner. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in YELLOWHAMMER'S *House.*

Enter YELLOWHAMMER *and* MAUDLIN.

Maud. O husband, husband, she will die, she will die!
There is no sign but death.
Yel. 'Twill be our shame then.
Maud. O, how she's chang'd in compass of an hour!
Yel. Ah, my poor girl! good faith, thou wert too cruel
To drag her by the hair.
Maud. You'd have done as much, sir.
To curb her of her humour.

Yel. 'Tis curb'd sweetly;
She catch'd her bane o' th' water.

Enter TIM.

Maud. How now, Tim?
Tim. Faith, busy, mother, about an epitaph
Upon my sister's death.
Maud. Death? she's not dead, I hope?
Tim. No, but she means to be, and that's as good,
And when a thing's done, 'tis done; you taught me[1] that, mother.
Yel. What is your tutor doing?
Tim. Making one too, in principal pure Latin,
Cull'd out of Ovid, [his] *de Tristibus.*
Yel. How does your sister look? is she not chang'd?
Tim. Chang'd? gold into white money was ne'er so chang'd
As is my sister's colour into paleness.

Enter MOLL, *led in by* Servants, *who place her in a chair.*

Yel. O, here she's brought; see how she looks like death!
Tim. Looks she like death, and ne'er a word made yet?
I must go beat my brains against a bed-post,
And get before my tutor. [*Exit.*

[1] "Does he allude to the foolish game called *A thing done*, &c.? See B. Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels* [iv. 1]."—*Dyce.*

Yel. Speak, how dost thou?
Moll. I hope I shall be well, for I'm as sick
At heart as I can be.
Yel. 'Las, my poor girl!
The doctor's making a most sovereign drink for thee,
The worst ingredience dissolv'd pearl and amber;
We spare no cost, girl.
Moll. Your love comes too late,
Yet timely thanks reward it. What is comfort,
When the poor patient's heart is past relief?
It is no doctor's art can cure my grief.
Yel. All is cast away, then;
Prithee, look upon me cheerfully.
Maud. Sing but a strain or two; thou wilt not think
How 'twill revive thy spirits: strive with thy fit,
Prithee, sweet Moll.
Moll. You shall have my good will, mother.
Maud. Why, well said, wench.
Moll. [*sings.*]

Weep eyes, break heart!
My love and I must part.
Cruel fates true love do soonest sever:
O, I shall see thee never, never, never!
O, happy is the maid whose life takes end
Ere it knows parent's frown or loss of friend!
Weep eyes, break heart!
My love and I must part.

Maud. O, I could die with music!—Well sung, girl.
Moll. If you call't so, it was.

Yel. She plays the swan,
And sings herself to death.

Enter TOUCHWOOD *senior.*

Touch. sen. By your leave, sir.
Yel. What are you, sir? or what's your business, pray?
Touch. sen. I may be now admitted, though the brother
Of him your hate pursu'd: it spreads no further.
Your malice sets in death, does it not, sir?
Yel. In death?
Touch. sen. He's dead: 'twas a dear love to him,
It cost him but his life, that was all, sir;
He paid enough, poor gentleman, for his love.
Yel. There's all our ill remov'd, if she were well now.— [*Aside.*
Impute not, sir, his end to any hate
That sprung from us; he had a fair wound brought that.
Touch. sen. That help'd him forward, I must needs confess;
But the restraint of love, and your unkindness,
Those were the wounds that from his heart drew blood;
But being past help, let words forget it too:
Scarcely three minutes ere his eyelids clos'd,
And took eternal leave of this world's light,
He wrote this letter, which by oath he bound me
To give to her own hands; that's all my business.
Yel. You may perform it then; there she sits.
Touch. sen. O, with a following look!

Yel. Ay, trust me, sir,
I think she'll follow him quickly.
Touch. sen. Here's some gold
He will'd me to distribute faithfully
Amongst your servants. [*Gives gold to* Servants.
Yel. 'Las, what doth he mean, sir?
Touch. sen. How cheer you, mistress?
Moll. I must learn of you, sir.
Touch. sen. Here is a letter from a friend of yours,
[*Giving letter to* MOLL.
And where that fails in satisfaction,
I have a sad tongue ready to supply.
Moll. How does he, ere I look on't?
Touch. sen. Seldom better;
Has a contented health now.
Moll. I'm most glad on't.
Maud. Dead, sir?
Yel. He is: now, wife, let's but get the girl
Upon her legs again, and to church roundly with her.
Moll. O, sick to death, he tells me: how does he after this?
Touch. sen. Faith, feels no pain at all; he's dead, sweet mistress.
Moll. Peace close mine eyes! [*Swoons.*
Yel. The girl! look to the girl, wife!
Maud. Moll, daughter, sweet girl, speak! look but once up,
Thou shalt have all the wishes of thy heart
That wealth can purchase!

Yel. O, she's gone for ever!
That letter broke her heart.
Touch. sen. As good now then
As let her lie in torment, and then break it.

Enter SUSAN.

Maud. O Susan, she thou lovedst so dear is gone!
Susan. O sweet maid!
Touch. sen. This is she that help'd her still.—
I've a reward here for thee.
Yel. Take her in,
Remove her from our sight, our shame and sorrow.
Touch. sen. Stay, let me help thee, 'tis the last cold kindness
I can perform for my sweet brother's sake.

[*Exeunt* TOUCHWOOD *senior*, SUSAN, *and* Servants, *carrying out* MOLL.

Yel. All the whole street will hate us, and the world
Point me out cruel: it's our best course, wife,
After we've given order for the funeral,
T' absent ourselves till she be laid in ground.
Maud. Where shall we spend that time?
Yel. I'll tell thee where, wench:
Go to some private church, and marry Tim
To the rich Brecknock gentlewoman.
Maud. Mass, a match;
We'll not lose all at once, somewhat we'll catch.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Room in Sir OLIVER KIX'S *House.*

Enter Sir OLIVER KIX *and* Servants.

Sir Ol. Ho, my wife's quicken'd; I'm a man for ever!
I think I have bestirr'd my stumps, i'faith.
Run, get your fellows all together instantly,
Then to the parish church and ring the bells.
First Ser. It shall be done, sir. [*Exit.*
Sir Ol. Upon my love
I charge you, villain, that you make a bonfire
Before the door at night.
Sec. Ser. A bonfire, sir?
Sir. Ol. A thwacking one, I charge you.
Sec. Ser. This is monstrous. [*Aside and exit.*
Sir Ol. Run, tell a hundred pound out for the gentleman
That gave my wife the drink, the first thing you do.
Third Ser. A hundred pounds, sir?
Sir Ol. A bargain: as our joy grows,
We must remember still from whence it flows,
Or else we prove ungrateful multipliers:
[*Exit* Third Servant.
The child is coming, and the land comes after;
The news of this will make a poor sir Walter:
I've strook it home, i'faith.
Fourth Ser. That you have, marry, sir;

But will not your worship go to the funeral
Of both these lovers?

Sir Ol. Both? go both together?

Fourth Ser. Ay, sir, the gentleman's brother will have it so;

'Twill be the pitifull'st sight! there is such running,
Such rumours, and such throngs, a pair of lovers
Had never more spectators, more men's pities,
Or women's wet eyes.

Sir. Ol. My wife helps the number then.

Fourth Ser. There is such drawing out of handkerchers;
And those that have no handkerchers lift up aprons.

Sir Ol. Her parents may have joyful hearts at this:
I would not have my cruelty so talk'd on
To any child of mine for a monopoly.

Fourth Ser. I believe you, sir.
'Tis cast[1] so, too, that both their coffins meet,
Which will be lamentable.

Sir Ol. Come, we'll see't. [*Exeunt.*

[1] Arranged.

SCENE IV.

Near a Church.

Recorders dolefully playing, enter at one door the coffin of TOUCHWOOD *junior, solemnly decked, his sword upon it, attended by many gentlemen in black, among whom are* Sir OLIVER KIX, ALLWIT, *and* Parson, TOUCHWOOD *senior being the chief mourner: at the other door the coffin of* MOLL, *adorned with a garland of flowers, and epitaphs pinned*[1] *on it, attended by many matrons and maids, among whom are* LADY KIX, MISTRESS ALLWIT, *and* SUSAN; *the coffins are set down, one right over against the other; and while all the company seem to weep and mourn, there is a sad song in the music-room.*

Touch. sen. Never could death boast of a richer prize
From the first parent; let the world bring forth
A pair of truer hearts. To speak but truth
Of this departed gentleman, in a brother
Might, by hard censure, be call'd flattery,
Which makes me rather silent in his right
Than so to be deliver'd to the thoughts
Of any envious hearer, starv'd in virtue,
And therefore pining to hear others thrive;
But for this maid, whom envy cannot hurt
With all her poisons, having left to ages
The true, chaste monument of her living name,

[1] It was the custom to affix elegies and epitaphs to coffins.

Which no time can deface, I say of her
The full truth freely, without fear of censure:
What nature could there sh[r]ine, that might redeem
Perfection home to woman, but in her
Was fully glorious? beauty set in goodness
Speaks what she was; that jewel so infix'd,
There was no want of anything of life
To make these virtuous precedents man and wife.
Allwit. Great pity of their deaths!
First Mour. Never more pity!
Lady Kix. It makes a hundred weeping eyes, sweet gossip.
Touch. sen. I cannot think there's any one amongst you
In this full fair assembly, maid, man, or wife,
Whose heart would not have sprung with joy and gladness
To have seen their marriage-day.
Sec. Mour.[1] It would have made
A thousand joyful hearts.
Touch. sen. Up then apace,
And take your fortunes, make these joyful hearts;
Here's none but friends.
[MOLL *and* TOUCHWOOD *junior rise out of their coffins.*
Third Mour.[1] Alive, sir?
Fourth Mour.[1] O sweet, dear couple!
Touch. sen. Nay, do not hinder 'em now, stand from about 'em;

[1] Old ed. "*All.*"

If she be caught again, and have this time,
I'll ne'er plot further for 'em, nor this honest chamber-
maid,
That help'd all at a push.
Touch. jun.[1] Good sir, apace.
Parson. Hands join now, but hearts for ever,
[MOLL *and* TOUCHWOOD *junior join hands.*
Which no parent's mood shall sever.
You shall forsake all widows, wives, and maids—
You lords, knights, gentlemen, and men of trades;—
And if in haste any article misses,
Go interline it with a brace of kisses.
Touch. sen. Here's a thing troll'd nimbly.—Give you
joy, brother; 40
Were't not better thou shouldst have her than the maid
should die?
Mis. All. To you, sweet mistress bride.
First Mour.[2] Joy, joy to you both.
Touch. sen. Here be your wedding-sheets you brought
along with you;
You may both go to bed when you please too.
Touch. jun. My joy wants utterance.
Touch. sen. Utter all at night.
Then, brother.
Moll. I am silent with delight.
Touch. sen. Sister, delight will silence any woman;
But you'll find your tongue again 'mong maid servants,
Now you keep house, sister.

[1] Old ed. "*T. S.*"
[2] Old ed. "*All.*"

Sec. Mour. Never was hour so fill'd with joy and wonder.

Touch. sen. To tell you the full story of this chamber-maid,
And of her kindness in this business to us,
'Twould ask an hour's discourse; in brief, 'twas she
That wrought it to this purpose cunningly.

Third Mour. We shall all love her for't.

Fourth Mour. See, who comes here now!

Enter YELLOWHAMMER *and* MAUDLIN.

Touch. sen. A storm, a storm! but we are shelter'd for it.

Yel. I will prevent[1] you all, and mock you thus,
You and your expectations; I stand happy,
Both in your lives, and your hearts' combination.

Touch. sen. Here's a strange day again!

Yel. The knight's prov'd villain;
All's come out now, his niece an arrant baggage;
My poor boy Tim is cast away this morning,
Even before breakfast, married a whore
Next to his heart.

Mourners. A whore!

Yel. His niece, forsooth.

Allwit. I think we rid our hands in good time of him.

Mis. All. I knew he was past the best when I gave him over.—
What is become of him, pray, sir?

---

[1] Anticipate.

Yel. Who, the knight?
He lies i' th' Knights' ward,[1]—now your belly, lady,
[*To* LADY KIX.
Begins to blossom, there's no peace for him,
His creditors are so greedy.
Sir Ol. Master Touchwood,
Hear'st thou this news? I'm so endear'd to thee
For my wife's fruitfulness, that I charge you both,
Your wife and thee, to live no more asunder
For the world's frowns; I've purse, and bed, and board for you:
Be not afraid to go to your business roundly;
Get children, and I'll keep them.
Touch. sen. Say you so, sir?
Sir Ol. Prove me with three at a birth, and thou dar'st now.
Touch. sen. Take heed how you dare a man, while you live, sir,
That has good skill at his weapon.
Sir Ol. 'Foot, I dare you, sir!

Enter TIM, Welshwoman, *and* Tutor.

Yel. Look, gentlemen, if e'er you saw[2] the picture
Of the unfortunate marriage, yonder 'tis.
Welsh. Nay, good sweet Tim——
Tim. Come from the university

[1] See note 3, vol. i. p. 192.
[2] Old ed. "say."

To marry a whore in London, with my tutor too!
O tempora! O mores!
Tutor. Prithee, Tim, be patient.
Tim. I bought a jade at Cambridge;
I'll let her out to execution, tutor,
For eighteenpence a-day, or Brainford[1] horse-races,
She'll serve to carry seven miles out of town well.
Where be these mountains? I was promis'd mountains,
But there's such a mist, I can see none of 'em.
What are become of those two thousand runts?[2]
Let's have a bout with them in the meantime;
A vengeance runt thee!
Maud. Good sweet Tim, have patience.
Tim. Flectere[3] *si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo,* mother.
Maud. I think you have married her in logic, Tim.
You told me once by logic you would prove
A whore an honest woman; prove her so, Tim,
And take her for thy labour.
Tim. Troth, I thank you:
I grant you, I may prove another man's wife so,
But not mine own.
Maud. There's no remedy now, Tim;
You must prove her so as well as you may.
Tim. Why then
My tutor and I will about her as well as we can:
Uxor non est meretrix, ergo falleris.[4]

---

[1] Brentford.
[2] See note 3, p. 77.
[3] Virg. *Æn.* vii. 312.
[4] Old ed. "falacis."

Welsh. Sir, if your logic cannot prove me honest,
There's a thing call'd marriage, and that makes me honest.

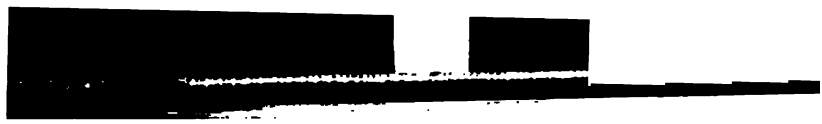
Maud. O, there's a trick beyond your logic, Tim!

Tim. I perceive then a woman may be honest
According to the English print, when she's
A whore in the Latin; so much for marriage and logic:
I'll love her for her wit, I'll pick out my runts there;
And for my mountains, I'll mount upon——[1]

Yel. So fortune seldom deals two marriages
With one hand, and both lucky; the best is,
One feast will serve them both: marry, for room,
I'll have the dinner kept in Goldsmiths' Hall,
To which, kind gallants, I invite you all.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

[1] So old ed.



THE WIDOW.

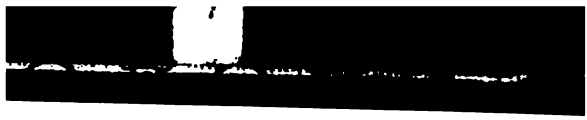
The Widdow A Comedie. As it was Acted at the private House in Black-Fryers, with great Applause, by His late Majesties Servants.

Written by { *Ben: Johnson.* / *John Fletcher.* / *Tho: Middleton.* } *Gent.*

Printed by the Originall Copy. London, Printed for Humphrey Moseley and are to be Sold at his Shop, at the Sign of the Princes Arms in St Pauls Church-yard. 1652. 4to.

"On the title-page of a copy of the 4to, in my possession, '*Ben Johnson*' and '*John Fletcher*' are drawn through with a pen, and the word 'alone' is written, in an old hand, after '*Tho: Middleton.*'"—*Dyce.*

From Sir Henry Herbert's Office-Book (see Malone's *Shakespeare*, 1821, iii. 273) we learn that in 1660 *The Widow* was one of the stock pieces belonging to the Red Bull Company, who played it on 16th November of that year. "It was revived," says Langbaine, "not many years ago at the King's House, with a new Prologue and Epilogue, which the reader may find in *London Drollery*, p. 11, 12."—*Account of English Dramatic Poets*, 1691, p. 298.



TO THE READER.

CONSIDERING how the curious pay some part of their esteem to excellent persons in the careful preservation but of their defaced statues; instead of decayed medals of the Romans' greatness, I believed it of more value to present you this lively piece, drawn by the art of Jonson, Fletcher, and Middleton, which is thought to have a near resemblance to the portraiture we have in Terence of those worthy minds, where the great Scipio and Lælius strove to twist the poet's ivy with the victor's bays. As the one was deserved by their work in subduing their country's enemies, so the other by their recreation and delight, which was to banish that folly and sadness that were worse than Hannibal or all the monsters and venom of Africa. Since our own countrymen are not in anything inferior, it were to be wished they had but so much encouragement, that the past license and abuses charged on the stage might not ever be thought too unpardonable to pass in oblivion, and so good laws and instructions for manners, uncapable of being regulated, which, if but according to this pattern,

certainly none need think himself the less a good Christian for owning the same desire as

Your humble servant,

ALEXANDER GOUGH.[1]

---

[1] Before the outbreak of the Civil Wars he had been an actor (of women's parts) at the Blackfriars. When the theatres were closed, he helped to organise surreptitious representations at noblemen's houses, particularly at Holland House. He "used to be the jackal and give notice of time and place." (See Wright's *Historia Histrionica.*)

PROLOGUE.

A SPORT only for Christmas is the play
This hour presents t' you ; to make you gay[1]
Is all th' ambition 't has, and fullest aim
Bent at your smiles, to win itself a name ;
And if your edge be not quite taken off,
Wearied with sports, I hope 'twill make you laugh.

---

[1] Old ed. "merry."—I have adopted Weber's alteration for the sake of the rhyme.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BRANDINO, *a justice.*
MARTINO, *his clerk.*
FRANCISCO.
ATTILIO.
RICARDO, *suitor to Valeria.*
Two Old Men, suitors to Valeria.
LATROCINIO, OCCULTO, SILVIO, STRATIO, FIDUCIO, } *Thieves.*
SERVELLIO.
Officers, Servants.

VALERIA, *a widow.*
PHILIPPA, *her sister, wife to Brandino.*
MARTIA, *daughter to one of Valeria's suitors, and disguised as Ansaldo.*
VIOLETTA, *waiting-maid to Philippa.*

Scene: CAPO D'ISTRIA and the neighbouring country.

THE WIDOW.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Room in BRANDINO'S *House.*

MARTINO *seated at a writing-table: enter* FRANCISCO.

Fran. Martino!

Mar. Signor Francisco? you're the luckiest gentleman to meet or see first in a morning: I never saw you yet but I was sure of money within less than half an hour.

Fran. I bring you the same luck still.

Mar. What, you do not? I hope, sir, you are not come for another warrant?

Fran. Yes, faith, for another warrant.

Mar. Why, there's my dream come out then. I never dreamed of a buttock but I was sure to have money for a warrant; it is the luckiest part of all the body to me: let every man speak as he finds. Now your usurer is of opinion that to dream of the devil is your wealthier dream; and I think if a man dream of

that part that brings many to the devil, 'tis as good, and has all one smatch indeed, for if one be the flesh, th' other's the broth: so 'tis in all his members, and we mark it; if gluttony be the meat, lechery is the porridge; they're both boiled together, and we clerks will have our modicum too, though it conclude in the twopenny chop. Why, sir, signor Francisco!

Fran. 'Twas her voice sure,
Or my soul takes delight to think it was,
And makes a sound like her's. [*Aside.*

Mar. Sir, I beseech you——

Fran. It is the prettiest-contriv'd building this!
What posy's that, I prithee?

Mar. Which, sir? that
Under the great brass squirt?

Fran. Ay, that, sir, that.

Mar. *From fire, from water, and all things amiss,*
Deliver the house of an honest justice.

Fran. There's like to be a good house kept then when fire and water's forbidden to come into the kitchen.—
Not yet a sight of her! this hour's unfortunate.—
[*Aside.*
And what's that yonder, prithee?—O love's famine,
There's no affliction like thee! [*Aside.*]—Ay, I hear you, sir.

Mar. You're quicker-ear'd than I then; you hear me
Before I heard myself.

Fran. A gift in friendship;
Some call it an instinct.

Mar. It may be;
Th' other's the sweeter phrase though. Look you, sir,
Mine own wit this, and 'tis as true as turtle;
A goose-quill and a clerk, a constable and a lantern,
Brings many a bawd from coach to cart, and many a thief to one turn.

Fran. That one turn help'd you well.

Mar. 'T has helped me to money indeed for many a warrant. I am forty dollars the better for that one turn; and 'twould come off quicker, 'twere ne'er a whit the worse for me. But, indeed, when thieves are taken, and break away twice or thrice one after another, there's my gains; then goes out more warrants to fetch 'em again. One fine nimble villain may be worth a man ten dollars in and out a' that fashion: I love such a one with my heart; ay, and will help him to 'scape too, and I can: hear you me that: I'll have him in at all times at a month's warning; nay, say I let him run like a summer nag all the vacation—see you these blanks? I'll send him but one of these bridles, and bring him in at Michaelmas with a vengeance. Nothing kills my heart but when one of 'em dies, sir; then there's no hope of more money: I had rather lose at all times two of my best kindred than an excellent thief, for he's a gentleman I'm more beholding to.

Fran. You betray your mystery too much, sir.—Yet no comfort?
'Tis but her sight that I waste precious time for,
For more I cannot hope for, she's so strict;
Yet that I cannot have. [*Aside*

Mar. I'm ready now, signor. Here are blank warrants of all dispositions; give me but the name and nature of your malefactor, and I'll bestow him according to his merits.

Fran. This only is th' excuse that bears me out,
And keeps off impudence and suspicion
From my too frequent coming. What name now
Shall I think on, and not to wrong the house?
This coxcomb will be prating. [*Aside.*]—One Attilio,[1]
His offence wilful murder.

Mar. Wilful murder? O, I love a' life[2] to have such a fellow come under my fingers! like a beggar that's long a-taking leave of a fat louse, I'm loath to part with him; I must look upon him over and over first. Are you wilful? i'faith, I'll be as wilful as you then. [*Writes.*

[PHILIPPA *and* VIOLETTA *appear above*[3] *at a window.*

Phil. Martino!

Mar. Mistress?

Phil. Make haste, your master's going.

Mar. I'm but about a wilful murder, forsooth; I'll despatch that presently.

Phil. Good morrow, sir.—O that I durst say more!

[*Aside, and exit above with* VIOLETTA.

Fran. 'Tis gone again: since such are all life's pleasures,
No sooner known but lost, he that enjoys 'em

---

[1] The name of one of the characters in the play.—Old ed. "Astilio."
[2] As my life.
[3] On the upper stage.

The length of life has but a longer dream,
He wakes to this i' th' end, and sees all nothing.

[PHILIPPA *and* VIOLETTA *appear again above.*

Phil. He cannot see me now; I'll mark him better
Before I be too rash. Sweetly compos'd he is;
Now as he stands he's worth a woman's love
That loves only for shape, as most on's do;
But I must have him wise as well as proper,[1]
He comes not in my books else;[2] and indeed
I've thought upon a course to try his wit.
Violetta.

Vio. Mistress?

Phil. Yonder's the gentleman again.

Vio. O sweet mistress,
Pray give me leave to see him!

Phil. Nay, take heed,
Open not the window, and you love me.

Vio. No, I've the view of [his] whole body here, mistress,
At this poor little slit: O, enough, enough!
In troth, 'tis a fine outside.

Phil. I see that.

Vio. Has curled his hair most judiciously well.

Phil. Ay, there's thy love now! it begins in barbarism. She buys a goose with feathers that loves a gentleman for 's hair; she may be cozened to her face,

[1] Handsome.
[2] Equivalent to "in my favour." See Nares' Glossary.

wench. Away: he takes his leave. Reach me that letter hither; quick, quick, wench.

[VIOLETTA *brings a letter, which* PHILIPPA *presently throws down.*

Mar. [*giving warrant to* FRANCISCO]. Nay, look upon't, and spare not: every one cannot get that kind of warrant from me, signor. Do you see this prick i' th' bottom? it betokens power and speed; it is a privy mark that runs betwixt the constables and my master: those that cannot read, when they see this, know 'tis for lechery or murder; and this being away, the warrant comes gelded and insufficient.

Fran. I thank you, sir.

Mar. Look you; all these are *nihils;*
They want the punction.

Fran. Yes, I see they do, sir.
There's for thy pains [*giving money*]:—mine must go unrewarded:
The better love, the worse by fate regarded. [*Aside and exit.*

Mar. Well, go thy ways for the sweetest customer that ever penman was blest withal! Now will he come for another to-morrow again: if he hold on this course, he will leave never a knave i' th' town within this twelvemonth: no matter, I shall be rich enough by that time.

Phil. Martino!

Mar. Say you, forsooth?

Phil. What paper's that the gentleman let fall there?

Mar. Paper?—'Tis the warrant, I hope; if it be, I'll hide it, and make him pay for't again. No, pox; 'tis not so happy. [*Aside.*

Phil. What is't sirrah?
Mar. 'Tis nothing but a letter, forsooth.
Phil. Is that nothing?
Mar. Nothing in respect of a warrant, mistress.
Phil. A letter? why, 't has been many a man's undoing, sir.
Mar. So has a warrant, and you go to that, mistress.
Phil. Read but the superscription, and away with't. Alas! it may concern the gentleman nearly!
Mar. Why, mistress, this letter is at home already.
Phil. At home? how mean you, sir?
Mar. You shall hear, mistress [*reads*]:—*To the deservingest of all her sex, and most worthy of his best respect and love, mistress Philippa Brandino.*
Phil. How, sir, to me?
Mar. To you, mistress.
Phil. Run, as thou lov'st my honour and thy life,
Call him again; I'll not endure this injury:—
But stay, stay, now I think on't, 'tis my credit,
I'll have your master's counsel. Ah, base fellow,
To leave his loose lines thus! 'tis even as much
As a poor honest gentlewoman's undoing,
Had I not a grave wise man to my husband:
And thou a vigilant varlet to admit
Thou car'st not whom!
Mar. 'Las, 'tis my office, mistress!
You know you have a kirtle every year,
And 'tis within two months of the time now;
The velvet's coming over: pray be milder.
A man that has a place must take money of anybody:

please you to throw me down but half a dollar, and I'll make you a warrant for him now; that's all I care for him.

Phil. Well, look you be clear now from this foul conspiracy
Against mine honour; or your master's love to you,
That makes you stout, shall not maintain you here;
It shall not, trust to't. [*Exit above with* VIOLETTA.

Mar. This is strange to me now:
Dare she do this, and but eight weeks to new-year's tide?
A man that had his blood as hot as her's now
Would fit her with French velvet: I'll go near it.

Enter BRANDINO *and* PHILIPPA.

Phil. If this be a wrong to modest reputation,
Be you the censurer, sir, that are the master
Both of your fame and mine.

Bran. Signor Francisco!
I'll make him fly the land.

Mar. That will be hard, sir:
I think he be not so well feather'd, master;
Has spent the best part of his patrimony.

Phil. Hark of his bold confederate!

Bran. There thou'rt bitter;
And I must chide thee now.

Phil. What should I think, sir?
He comes to your man for warrants.

Bran. There it goes then.—
Come hither, knave: comes he to you for warrants?

Mar. Why, what of that, sir?
You know I give no warrants to make cuckolds:
That comes by fortune and by nature, sir.
Bran. True, that comes by fortune and by nature.—
Wife,
Why dost thou wrong this man?
Mar. He needs no warrant, master, that goes about such business: a cuckold-maker carries always his warrant about him.
Bran. La, has he answer'd well now, to the full?
What cause hast thou t' abuse him?
Phil. Hear me out, I pray:
Through his admittance, h'as had opportunity
To come into the house, and court me boldly.
Bran. Sirrah, you're foul again, methinks.
Mar. Who, I, sir?
Bran. You gave this man admittance into th' house.
Mar. That's true, sir: you ne'er gave me any order yet
To write my warrants i' th' street.
Bran. Why, sure thou tak'st delight
To wrong this fellow, wife, ha, 'cause I love him?
Phil. Pray, see the fruits; see what h'as left behind here:
Be angry where you should be: there's few wives
Would do as I do.
Bran. Nay, I'll say that for thee,
I ne'er found thee but honest.
Phil. She's a beast
That ever was found otherways.

Bran. Read, Martino:
Mine eyes are sore already, and such business
Would put 'em out quite.

Mar. [*reads letter*]. *Fair, dear, and incomparable mistress*——

Bran. O, every letter draws a tooth, methinks!

Mar. And it leads mine to watering.

Phil. Here's no[1] villany!

Mar. [*reads*]. *My love being so violent, and the opportunity so precious in your husband's absence to-night, who, as I understand, takes a journey this morning*——

Bran. O plot of villany!

Phil. Am I honest, think you, sir?

Bran. Exactly honest, perfectly improv'd.[2]—
On, on, Martino.

Mar. [*reads*]. *I will make bold, dear mistress, though your chastity has given me many a repulse, to wait the sweet blessings of this long-desired opportunity at the back gate, between nine and ten this night*——

Bran. I feel this Inns-a'-court man in my temples!

Mar. [*reads*]. *Where, if your affection be pleased to receive me, you receive the faithfullest that ever vowed service to woman.*—FRANCISCO.

Bran. I will make Francisco smart for't!

Phil. Show him the letter, let him know you know him;
That will torment him: all your other courses
Are nothing, sir, to that: that breaks his heart.

---

[1] Ironical.
[2] *i.e.*, proved.

Bran. The strings shall not hold long then.—Come, Martino.

Phil. Now if Francisco have any wit at all,
He comes at night; if not, he never shall. [*Aside.*

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Country near FRANCISCO'S *House.*

Enter FRANCISCO, RICARDO, *and* ATTILIO.

Ric. Nay, mark, mark it, Francisco; it was the naturallest courtesy that ever was ordained; a young gentleman being spent, to have a rich widow set him up again. To see how fortune has provided for all mortality's ruins! your college for your old-standing scholar, your hospital for your lame-creeping soldier, your bawd for your mangled roarer,[1] your open house for your beggar, and your widow for your gentleman;—ha, Francisco?

Fran. Ay, sir, you may be merry; you're in hope of a rich widow.

Ric. And why shouldst not thou be in hope of another, if there were any spirit in thee? thou art as likely a fellow as any is in the company. I'll be hanged now if I do not hit the true cause of thy sadness; and confess truly, i'faith; thou hast some land unsold yet, I hold my life.

[1] Hectoring gallant.

Fran. Marry, I hope so, sir.

Ric. A pox on't, have I found it? 'Slight, away with't with all speed, man! I was never merry at heart while I had a foot. Why, man, fortune never minds us till we are left alone to ourselves; for what need she take care for them that do nothing but take care for themselves? Why, dost think if I had kept my lands still, I should ever have looked after a rich widow? alas! I should have married some poor young maid, got five and twenty children, and undone myself!

Fran. I protest, sir, I should not have the face, though, to come to a rich widow with nothing.

Ric. Why, art thou so simple as thou makest thyself? dost think, i'faith, I come to a rich widow with nothing?

Fran. I mean with state not answerable to her's.

Ric. Why, there's the fortune, man, that I talk'd on;
She knows all this, and yet I'm welcome to her.

Fran. Ay? that's strange, sir.

Ric. Nay more, to pierce thy hard heart,
And make thee sell thy land, if thou'st any grace,
She has, 'mongst others, two substantial suitors:
One, in good time be't spoke, I owe much money to;
She knows this too, and yet I'm welcome to her,
Nor dares th' unconscionable rascal trouble me;
Sh'as told him thus, those that profess love to her
Shall have the liberty to come and go,
Or else get him gone first; she knows not yet
Where fortune may bestow her; she's her gift,
Therefore to all will show a kind respect.

Fran. Why, this is like a woman: I ha' no luck in't.

Ric. And as at a sheriff's table,—O blest custom!—
A poor indebted gentleman may dine,
Feed well and without fear, and depart so,
So to her lips fearless I come and go.

Fran. You may well boast, you're much the happier man, sir.

Ric. So you would be, and you would sell your land, sir.

Fran. I've heard the circumstance of your sweet fortunes:
Prithee give ear to my unlucky tale now.

Ric. That's an ill hearing; but come on for once, sir.

Fran. I never yet lov'd but one woman.

Ric. Right,
I begun so too; but I've lov'd a thousand since.

Fran. Pray, hear me, sir: but this is a man's wife.

Ric. So has five hundred of my thousand been.

Fran. Nay, see and you'll regard me!

Ric. No? you see I do;
I bring you an example in for everything.

Fran. This man's wife——

Ric. So you said.

Fran. Seems very strict.

Ric. Ha, humph!

Fran. Do you laugh at that?

Ric. Seems very strict, you said;
I hear you, man, i'faith; you're so jealous still!

Fran. But why should that make you laugh?

Ric. Because she seems so: you're such another!

Fran. Nay, sir, I think she is.

Ric. You cannot tell[1] then?

Fran. I dare not ask the question, I protest,
For fear of a repulse; which yet not having,
My mind's the quieter, and I live in hope still.

Ric. Ha, hum! this 'tis to be a landed man.
Come, I perceive I must show you a little of my fortune, and instruct you.
Not ask the question?

Fran. Methought still she frown'd, sir.

Ric. Why, that's the cause, fool, that she look'd so scurvily.
Come, come, make me your woman; you'll ne'er do't else;
I'll show you her condition[2] presently.
I perceive you must begin like a young vaulter, and get up at horse-tail before you get into the saddle: have you the boldness to utter your mind to me now, being but in hose and doublet? I think, if I should put on a farthingale, thou wouldst never have the heart to do't.

Fran. Perhaps I should not then for laughing at you, sir.

Ric. In the mean time I fear I shall laugh at thee without one.

---

[1] *i.e.*, you know not what to think of it. See Dyce's *Shakespeare Glossary*.

[2] Disposition.

Fran. Nay, you must think, friend, I dare speak to a woman.

Ric. You shall pardon me for that, friend: I will not think it till I see't.

Fran. Why, you shall then: I shall be glad to learn too
Of one so deep as you are.

Ric. So you may, sir.—
Now 'tis my best course to look mildly; I shall put him out at first else.

Fran. A word, sweet lady!

Ric. With me, sir? say your pleasure.

Fran. O Ricardo,
Thou art too good to be a woman long!

Ric. Do not find fault with this, for fear I prove
Too scornful; be content when you're well us'd.

Fran. You say well, sir.—Lady, I've lov'd you long.

Ric. 'Tis a good hearing, sir.—If he be not out now, I'll be hanged!

Fran. You play a scornful woman![1] I perceive, Ricardo, you have not been used to 'em: why, I'll come in at my pleasure with you. Alas! 'tis nothing for a man to talk when a woman gives way to't! one shall seldom meet with a lady so kind as thou playedst her.

Ric. Not altogether, perhaps: he that draws their pictures must flatter 'em a little; they'll look he that plays 'em should do't a great deal then.

[1] A reference, perhaps, to Beaumont and Fletcher's *Scornful Lady*, printed in 1616, but produced *circ.* 1612.

Fran. Come, come, I'll play the woman that I'm us'd to:
I see you ne'er wore shoe that pinch'd you yet;
All your things comes on easy.

Ric. Say you so, sir?
I'll try your ladyship, 'faith.—Lady, well met.

Fran. I do not think so, sir.

Ric. A scornful gom![1] and at the first dash too!
My widow never gave me such an answer;
I'll to you again, sir.—
Fairest of creatures, I do love thee infinitely!

Fran. There's nobody bids you, sir.

Ric. Pox on thee, thou art the beastliest, crossest baggage that ever man met withal! but I'll see thee hanged, sweet lady, ere I be daunted with this.—Why, thou'rt too awkward, sirrah.

Fran. Hang thee, base fellow!

Ric. Now, by this light, he thinks he does't indeed! Nay, then, have at your plum-tree![2] faith, I'll not be foiled.—Though you seem to be careless, madam, as you have enough wherewithal to be, yet I do, must, and will love you.

---

[1] "Gom" (A.-S.) = man, fellow. Reed observes prosily:—"Ricardo therefore means that Francisco, in his assumed character of a woman, acts not with the softness and delicacy of a female, but with the scorn and haughtiness of a male." In his edition of *Beaumont and Fletcher*, iv. 318, Dyce proposes to read "glum," *i.e.*, a gloomy, sour look.

[2] "Plum-tree" = *pudendum muliebre*. See Cotgrave under *Hoche-prunier*. The expression "have at your plum-tree" occurs again in *Anything for a Quiet Life*.

Fran. Sir, if you begin to be rude, I'll call my woman.

Ric. What a pestilent quean's this! I shall have much ado with her, I see that.—Tell me, as you're a woman, lady, what serve kisses for but to stop all your mouths?

Fran. Hold, hold, Ricardo!

Ric. Disgrace me, widow?

Fran. Art mad? I'm Francisco.

Att. Signor Ricardo, up, up!

Ric. Who is't? Francisco?

Fran. Francisco, quotha! what, are you mad, sir?

Ric. A bots on thee, thou dost not know what injury thou hast done me; I was i' the fairest dream. This is your way now, and,[1] you can follow it.

Fran. 'Tis a strange way, methinks.

Ric. Learn you to play a woman not so scornfully then;
For I am like the actor that you spoke on:
I must have the part that overcomes the lady,
I never like the play else. Now your friendship,
But to assist a subtle trick I ha' thought on,
And the rich widow's mine within these three hours.

Att. } We should be proud of that, sir.
Fran. }

Ric. List to me then.
I'll place you two,—I can do't handsomely,
I know the house so well,—to hear the conference
'Twixt her and I. She's a most affable one,
Her words will give advantage, and I'll urge 'em
To the kind proof, to catch her in a contract;

[1] If.

Then shall you both step in as witnesses,
And take her in the snare.
Fran. But do you love her?
And then 'twill prosper.
Ric. By this hand, I do,
Not for her wealth, but for her person too.
Fran. It shall be done then.
Ric. But stay, stay, Francisco;
Where shall we meet with thee some two hours hence, now?
Fran. Why, hark you, sir. [*Whispers.*
Ric. Enough; command my life:
Get me the widow, I'll get thee the wife.
[*Exeunt* RICARDO *and* ATTILIO.
Fran. O, that's now with me past hope! yet I must love her:
I would I could not do't!

Enter BRANDINO *and* MARTINO.

Mar. Yonder's the villain, master.
Bran. Francisco? I am happy.
Mar. Let's both draw, master, for there's nobody with him:
Stay, stay, master,
Do not you draw till I be ready too;
Let's draw just both together, and keep even.
Bran. What and we kill'd him now, before he saw us?
Mar. No, then he'll hardly see to read the letter.
Bran. That's true; good counsel, marry.
Mar. Marry, thus much, sir; you may kill him law-

fully all the while he's a-reading on't; as an Anabaptist may lie with a brother's wife all the while he's asleep.

Bran. He turns, he looks.—Come on, sir; you, Francisco!
I lov'd your father well, but you're a villain;
He lov'd me well too, but you love my wife, sir:
After whom take you that? I will not say
Your mother play'd false.

Fran. No, sir, you were not best.

Bran. But I will say in spite of thee, my wife's honest.

Mar. And I, my mistress.

Fran. You may, I'll give you leave.

Bran. Leave or leave not, there she defies you, sir.
[*Gives the letter.*
Keep your adulterous sheet to wind you in,
Or cover your forbidden parts at least,
For fear you want one: many a lecher may,
That sins in cambric now.

Mar. And in lawn too, master.

Bran. Nay, read and tremble, sir.

Mar. Now shall I do't, master? I see a piece of an open seam in his shirt: shall I run him in there? for my sword has ne'er a point.

Bran. No; let him foam a while.

Mar. If your sword be no better than mine, we shall not kill him by daylight; we had need have a lanthorn.

Bran. Talk not of lanthorns; he's a sturdy lecher;
He would make the horns fly about my ears.

Fran. I apprehend thee: admirable woman!
Which to love best I know not, thy wit or beauty. [*Aside.*

Bran. Now, sir, have you well view'd your bastard there,
Got of your lustful brain? give you joy on't!

Fran. I thank you, sir: although you speak in jest,
I must confess I sent your wife this letter,
And often courted her, tempted and urg'd her.

Bran. Did you so, sir? then first,
Before I kill thee, I forewarn thee my house.

Mar. And I, before I kill thee, forewarn thee my office: die to-morrow next, thou never get'st warrant of me more, for love or money.

Fran. Remember but again from whence I came, sir,
And then I know you cannot think amiss of me.

Bran. How's this?

Mar. Pray, hear him; it may grow to a peace: for, master, though we have carried the business nobly, we are not altogether so valiant as we should be.

Bran. Peace? thou say'st true in that.—What is't you'd say, sir?

Fran. Was not my father—quietness be with him!—
And you sworn brothers?

Bran. Why, right; that's it urges me.

Fran. And could you have a thought that I could wrong you,
As far as the deed goes?

Bran. You took the course, sir.

Fran. To make you happy, and[1] you rightly weighed it.

[1] If.

Mar. Troth, I'll put up[1] at all adventures, master:
It comes off very fair yet.
Fran. You in years
Married a young maid: what does the world judge, think you?
Mar. Byrlady,[2] master, knavishly enough, I warrant you;
I should do so myself.
Fran. Now, to damp slander,
And all her envious and suspicious brood,
I made this friendly trial of her constancy,
Being son to him you lov'd; that now confirmed,
I might advance my sword against the world
In her most fair defence, which joys my spirit.
Mar. O master, let me weep while you embrace him!
Bran. Francisco, is thy father's soul in thee?
Lives he here still? what, will he show himself
In his male seed to me? give me thy hand;
Methinks it feels now like thy father's to me:
Prithee, forgive me!
Mar. And me too, prithee!
Bran. Come to my house; thy father never miss'd it.
Mar. Fetch now as many warrants as you please, sir,
And welcome too.
Fran. To see how soon man's goodness
May be abus'd!
Bran. But now I know thy intent,
Welcome to all that I have!

[1] Sheathe my sword. [2] By our Lady.

Fran. Sir, I take it:
A gift so given, hang him that would forsake it! [*Exit.*

Bran. Martino, I applaud my fortune and thy counsel.

Mar. You never have ill fortune when you follow it. Here was things carried now in the true nature of a quiet duello; a great strife ended, without the rough soldier or the ——.[1] And now you may take your journey.

Bran. Thou art my glee, Martino. [*Exeunt.*

[1] There is a blank left in the old ed.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Room in VALERIA'S *House.*

Enter VALERIA *and* SERVELLIO.

Val. Servellio!
Ser. Mistress?
Val. If that fellow come again,
Answer him without me; I'll not speak with him.
Ser. He in the nutmeg-colour'd band, forsooth?
Val. Ay, that spic'd coxcomb, sir: ne'er may I marry again, [*Exit* SERVELLIO.
If his right worshipful idolatrous face
Be not most fearfully painted; so hope comfort me,
I might perceive it peel in many places;
And under 's eye lay a betraying foulness,
As maids sweep dust o' th' house all to one corner;
It show'd me enough there, prodigious pride,
That cannot but fall scornfully. I'm a woman;
Yet, I praise heaven, I never had th' ambition
To go about to mend a better workman:
She ever shames herself i' th' end that does it.

He that likes me not now as heaven made me,
I'll never hazard hell to do him a pleasure;
Nor lie every night like a woodcock in paste[1]
To please some gaudy goose in the morning:
A wise man likes that best that is itself,
Not that which only seems, though it look fairer.
Heaven send me one that loves me, and I'm happy!
Of whom I'll make great trial ere I have him,
Though I speak all men fair, and promise sweetly:
I learn that of my suitors; 'tis their own,
Therefore injustice 'twere to keep it from 'em.

Enter RICARDO, *followed by* FRANCISCO *and* ATTILIO, *who conceal themselves.*

Ric. And so, as I said, sweet widow——

Val. Do you begin where you left, sir?

Ric. I always desire, when I come to a widow, to begin i' th' middle of a sentence; for I presume she has a bad memory of a woman that cannot remember what goes before.

Val. Stay, stay, sir; let me look upon you well;
Are not you painted too?

Ric. How, painted, widow?

Val. Not painted widow; I do not use it, trust me, sir.

Ric. That makes me love thee.

Val. I mean painted gentleman,
Or, if you please to give him a greater style, sir:

[1] Almond paste was used for whitening the skin.

Blame me not, sir; it's a dangerous age, I tell you;
Poor simple-dealing women had need look about 'em.

Ric. But is there such a fellow in the world, widow,
As you are pleas'd to talk on?

Val. Nay, here lately, sir.

Ric. Here? a pox, I think I smell him! 'tis vermilion sure; ha, oil of ben![1] Do but show him me, widow, and let me never hope for comfort, if I do not immediately geld him, and grind his face upon one o' th' stones.

Val. Suffices you've express'd me your love and valour,
And manly hate 'gainst that unmanly pride:
But, sir, I'll save you that labour; he ne'er comes
Within my door again.

Ric. I'll love your door the better while I know't, widow; a pair of such brothers are fitter for posts[2] without door indeed, to make a show at a new-chosen magistrate's gate, than to be used in a woman's chamber. No, sweet widow, having me, you've the truth of a man; all that you see of me is full mine own, and what you see or not see, shall be yours: I ever hated to be beholding to art, or to borrow anything but money.

Val. True, and that you never use to pay again.

Ric. What matter is't? if you be pleased to do't for me, I hold it as good.

---

[1] An aromatic gum brought from the Levant.

[2] Frequent allusions are made to the posts that stood at sheriffs' and other magistrates' doors. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, i. 5,—"He says he'll stand at your door like a sheriff's post." These posts were repainted when new magistrates entered into office. See Nares' *Glossary*.

Val. O, soft you, sir, I pray!

Ric. Why, i'faith, you may, and you will.

Val. I know that, sir.

Ric. Troth, and I would have my will then, if I were as you: there's few women else but has.

Val. But since I cannot have it in all, signor,
I care not to have it in anything.

Ric. Why, you may have't in all, and you will, widow.

Val. Pish! I'd have one that loves me for myself, sir,
Not for my wealth; and that I cannot have.

Ric. What say you to him that does the thing you wish for?

Val. Why, here's my hand, I'll marry none but him then.

Ric. Your hand and faith?

Val. My hand and faith.

Ric. 'Tis I, then.

Val. I shall be glad on't, trust me; 'shrew my heart else!

Ric. A match!

[FRANCISCO *and* ATTILIO *come forward.*

Fran. Give you joy, sweet widow!

Att. Joy to you both!

Val. How?

Ric. Nay, there's no starting now, I have you fast, widow.—
You're witness, gentlemen.

Fran. } We'll be depos'd on't.
Att. }

Val. Am I betray'd to this, then? then I see
'Tis for my wealth: a woman's wealth's her traitor.
Ric. 'Tis for love chiefly, I protest, sweet widow;
I count wealth but a fiddle to make us merry.
Val. Hence!
Ric. Why, thou'rt mine.
Val. I do renounce it utterly.
Ric. Have I not hand and faith?
Val. Sir, take your course.
Ric. With all my heart; ten courses, and you will, widow.
Val. Sir, sir, I'm not so gamesome as you think me;
I'll stand you out by law.
Ric. By law? O cruel, merciless woman,
To talk of law, and know I have no money!
Val. I will consume myself to the last stamp,[1]
Before you gett'st me.
Ric. 'Life, I'll be as wilful then, too;
I'll rob all the carriers in Christendom,
But I'll have thee, and find my lawyers money.
I scorn to get thee under *forma pauperis;*
I have too proud a heart and love thee better.
Val. As for you, gentlemen, I'll take course against you:
You came into my house without my leave;
Your practices are cunning and deceitful;
I know you not, and I hope law will right me.
Ric. It is sufficient that your husband knows 'em:
'Tis not your business to know every man;
An honest wife contents herself with one.

[1] Halfpenny.

Val. You know what you shall trust to. Pray depart, sir,
And take your rude confederates along with you,
Or I will send for those shall force your absence:
I'm glad I found your purpose out so soon.
How quickly may poor women be undone!

Ric. Lose thee? by this hand, I'll fee fifteen counsellors first, though I undo a hundred poor men for 'em; and I'll make 'em yaul one another deaf, but I'll have thee.

Val. Me?

Ric. Thee.

Val. Ay, fret thy heart out. [*Exit* RICARDO.

Fran. Were I he now,
I'd see thee starve for man before I had thee.

Val. Pray, counsel him to that, sir, and I'll pay you well.

Fran. Pay me? pay your next husband.

Val. Do not scorn't, gallant; a worse woman than I
Has paid a better man than you.
[*Exeunt* ATTILIO *and* FRANCISCO.

Enter two Suitors.

First Suit. Why, how now, sweet widow?

Val. O kind gentlemen, I'm so abus'd here!

Both Suit. Abused? [*Drawing their swords.*

Val. What will you do, sirs? put up your weapons.

Sec. Suit. Nay, they're not so easily drawn, that I must tell you; mine has not been out this three years;

marry, in your cause, widow, 'twould not be long a-drawing. Abused? by whom, widow?

Val. Nay, by a beggar.

Sec. Suit. A beggar? I'll have him whipt then, and sent to the House of Correction.

Val. Ricardo, sir.

Sec. Suit. Ricardo? nay, by th' mass, he's a gentleman-beggar; he'll be hanged before he be whipt. Why, you'll give me leave to clap him up, I hope?

Val. 'Tis too good for him; that's the thing he'd have,
He would be clapt up, whether I would or no, methinks;
Plac'd two of his companions privately,
Unknown to me, on purpose to entrap me
In my kind answers, and at last stole from me
That which I fear will put me to some trouble,
A kind of verbal courtesy, which his witnesses
And he, forsooth, call by the name of contract.

First Suit. O politic villain!

Val. But I'm resolv'd, gentlemen,
If the whole power of my estate can cast him,
He never shall obtain me.

Sec. Suit. Hold you there, widow;
Well fare your heart for that, i'faith.

First Suit. Stay, stay, stay;
You broke no gold between you?

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[1] See note 1, vol. iv. p. 355.—Scott in *The Bride of Lammermoor* says that the practice of breaking gold (as a pledge of constancy) still lingered in some parts of the country. I suspect that in these hard times it has become quite extinct.

Val. We broke nothing, sir.
First Suit. Nor drunk to one another?
Val. Not a drop, sir.
First Suit. You're sure of this you speak?
Val. Most certain, sir.
First Suit. Be of good comfort, wench: I'll undertake then,
At mine own charge, to overthrow him for thee.
Val. O, do but that, sir, and you bind me to you!
Here shall I try your goodness. I'm but a woman,
And, alas! ignorant in law businesses:
I'll bear the charge most willingly.
First Suit. Not a penny;
Thy love will reward me.
Val. And where love must be,
It is all but one purse, now I think on't.
First Suit. All comes to one, sweet widow.
Sec. Suit. Are you so forward? [*Aside.*
First Suit. I know his mates, Attilio and Francisco;
I'll get out process, and attach 'em all.
We'll begin first with them.
Val. I like that strangely.
First Suit. I have a daughter run away, I thank her;
I'll be a scourge to all youth for her sake:
Some of 'em has got her up.
Val. Your daughter? what, sir, Martia?
First Suit. Ay, a shake wed her!
I would have married her to a wealthy gentleman,
No older than myself; she was like to be shrewdly hurt, widow.

Val. It was too happy for her.
First Suit. I'm of thy mind.
Farewell, sweet widow; I'll about this straight;
I'll have 'em all three put into one writ,
And so save charges.
Val. How I love your providence! [*Exit* First Suitor.
Sec. Suit. Is my nose bor'd! I'll cross ye both for this,
Although it cost me as much o' th' other side:
I have enough, and I will have my humour.
I may get out of her what may undo her too. [*Aside.*
Hark you, sweet widow, you must now take heed
You be of a sure ground, he'll o'erthrow you else.
Val. Marry, fair hope, forbid!
Sec. Suit. That will he: marry, le' me see, le' me see;
Pray how far past it 'tween you and Ricardo?
Val. Farther, sir,
Than I would now it had; but I hope well yet.
Sec. Suit. Pray, let me hear't; I've a shrewd guess o' th' law.
Val. Faith, sir, I rashly gave my hand and faith
To marry none but him.
Sec. Suit. Indeed!
Val. Ay, trust me, sir.
Sec. Suit. I'm very glad on't; I'm another witness,
And he shall have you now.
Val. What said you, sir?
Sec. Suit. He shall not want money in an honest cause, widow;
I know I've enough, and I will have my humour.
Val. Are all the world betrayers?

Sec. Suit. Pish, pish, widow!
You've borne me in hand[1] this three months, and now fobb'd me:
I've known the time when I could please a woman.
I'll not be laugh'd at now; when I'm crost, I'm a tiger:
I have enough, and I will have my humour.
Val. This only shows your malice to me,
The world knows you ha' small reason to help him,
So much in your debt already.
Sec. Suit. Therefore I do't,
I have no way but that to help myself;
Though I lose you, I will not lose all, widow;
He marrying you, as I will follow't for him,
I'll make you pay his debts, or lie without him.
Val. I look'd for this from you.
Sec. Suit. I ha' not deceiv'd you then: [*Exit* VALERIA.
Fret, vex, and chafe, I'm obstinate where I take.
I'll seek him out, and cheer him up against her:
I ha' no charge at all, no child of mine own,
But two I got once of a scouring-woman,
And they're both well provided for, they're i' th' Hospital.[2]
I have ten thousand pounds to bury me,
And I will have my humour. [*Exit.*

---

[1] "Borne me in hand" = kept me in expectation.

[2] *i.e.*, Christ's Hospital, where foundlings were educated. Cf. *The New Inn*, iv. 2:—

> "He had no father, I warrant him, that durst own him
> Some foundling in a stall or the church-porch;
> Brought up in the Hospital."

SCENE II.

A Street.

Enter FRANCISCO.

Fran. A man must have a time to serve his pleasure,
As well as his dear friend: I'm forc'd to steal from 'em,
To get this night of sport for mine own use.
What says her amiable, witty letter here? [*Reads letter.*
'Twixt nine and ten,—now 'tis 'twixt six and seven;
As fit as can be; he that follows lechery
Leaves all at six and seven, and so do I, methinks:
Sun sets at eight, it's 'bove an hour high yet;
Some fifteen mile have I before I reach her,
But I've an excellent horse; and a good gallop
Helps man as much as a provoking banquet.

Enter First Suitor *and* Officers.

First Suit. Here's one of 'em; begin with him first, officers.

First Off. By virtue of this writ we attach your body, sir. [Officers *seize* FRANCISCO.

Fran. My body? 'life, for what?

First Suit. Hold him fast, officers.

First Off. The least of us can do't, now his sword's off, sir;
We have a trick of hanging upon gentlemen,
We never lose a man.

Fran. O treacherous fortune!—
Why, what's the cause?
First Suit. The widow's business, sir:
I hope you know me?
Fran. For a busy coxcomb,
This fifteen year, I take it.
First Suit. O, you're mad, sir;
Simple though you make me, I stand for the widow.
Fran. She's simply stood for then: what's this to me, sir,
Or she, or you, or any of these flesh-hooks?
First Suit. You're like to find good bail before you leave us,
Or lie till the suit's tried.
Fran. O my love's misery!
First Suit. I'm put in trust to follow't, and I'll do't
With all severity; build upon that, sir.

Enter RICARDO *and* ATTILIO.

Fran. How I could[1] curse myself!
Ric. Look, here's Francisco:
Will you believe me, now you see his qualities?
Att. 'Tis strange to me.
Ric. I tell you 'tis his fashion:
He never stole away in's life from me,
But still I found him in such scurvy company.—
A pox on thee, Francisco! wilt never leave
Thy old tricks? are these lousy companions for thee?

[1] Old ed. "would."

Fran. Pish, pish, pish!

First Suit. Here they be all three now; 'prehend 'em, officers. [Officers *seize* RICARDO *and* ATTILIO.

Ric. What's this?

Fran. I gave you warning enough to make away;
I'm in for the widow's business, so are you now.

Ric. What, all three in a noose? this is like a widow's business indeed.

First Suit. Sh'as catch'd you, gentlemen, as you catch'd her.
The widow means now to begin with you, sir.

Ric. I thank her heartily, sh'as taught me wit; for had I been any but an ass, I should ha' begun with her indeed. By this light, the widow's a notable housewife! she bestirs herself. I have a greater mind to her now than e'er I had: I cannot go to prison for one I love better, I protest; that's one good comfort.—
And what are you, I pray, sir, for a coxcomb?[1]

First Suit. It seems you know me by your anger, sir.

Ric. I've a near guess at you, sir.

First Suit. Guess what you please, sir,
I'm he ordain'd to trounce you, and, indeed,
I am the man must carry her.

Ric. Ay, to me;
But I'll swear she's a beast, and she carry thee.

First Suit. Come, where's your bail, sir? quickly, or away.

Ric. Sir, I'm held wrongfully; my bail's taken already.

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[1] "What are you . . . for a coxcomb?" See note 1, vol. iii. p. 41.

First [illegible] Where [illegible]?

Ric. Here [illegible] I [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]— [illegible]

Enter Second [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]? [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]:
I [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]: [illegible] [illegible], [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

First [illegible] We [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Now you may [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

Sec. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

First [illegible] And [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

Sec. [illegible] Know you me, officers?

First Off. [illegible] [illegible] worship, sir.

Ric. I know the [illegible] so well I [illegible] not look upon him. [illegible]

Sec. [illegible] Upon my worth, deliver me that gentleman.

Fran. Which gentleman?

Sec. [illegible] Not you, sir; you're too hasty.
No, nor you neither, sir; pray, stay your time.

Ric. There's all that I know; and I dare not think he means me.

Sec. [illegible] Deliver me Ricardo.

Ric. [illegible] sure he lies,
Or else I do not hear well.

[illegible]

First Off. Signor Ricardo——
Ric. Well, what's the matter?
First Off. You may go; who lets[1] you?
It is his worship's pleasure, sir, to bail you.
Ric. Bail me?
Sec. Suit. Ay, will I, sir. Look in my face, man;
Thou'st a good cause; thou'lt pay me when thou'rt able?
Ric. Ay, every penny, as I'm a gentleman.
Sec. Suit. No matter if thou dost not, then I'll make thee,
And that's as good at all times.
First Suit. But, I pray, sir,—
You go against the hair[2] there.
Sec. Suit. Against the widow, you mean, sir;
Why, 'tis my purpose truly, and 'gainst you too:
I saw your politic combination;
I was thrust out between you. Here stands one
Shall do as much for you, and he stands rightest,
His cause is strong and fair; nor shall he want
Money, or means, or friends, but he shall have her:
I have enough, and I will have my humour.
First Suit. Hang thee! I have a purse as good as thine.
Ric. I think they're much alike, they're rich knaves both.— [*Aside.*
Heart, and I take you railing at my patron, sir,
I'll cramp your joints!

[1] Hinders.—The words "You may go; who lets you?" are given to Ricardo in the old ed.
[2] See note 2, vol. ii. p. 49.

Sec. Suit. Let him alone, sweet honey;
I thank thee for thy love though.
Ric. This is wonderful!
Fran. O Ricardo,
'Tis seven struck in my pocket! I lose time now.
Ric. What say'st, Francisco?
Fran. I ha' mighty business
That I ne'er thought on; get me bail'd, I'm spoilt else.
Ric. Why, you know, 'tis such a strange miraculous courtesy,
I dare not be too forward to ask more of him,
For fear he repent this, and turn me in again.
Fran. Do somewhat, and you love me!
Ric. I'll make trial, faith.—
May't please you, sir,—'life, if I should spoil all now!
Sec. Suit. What say'st, Ricardo?
Ric. Only a thing by th' way, sir;
Use your own pleasure.
Sec. Suit. That I like well from thee.
Ric. 'Twere good, and those two gentlemen were bail'd too;
They're both my witnesses.
Sec. Suit. They're well, they're well:
And they were bail'd, we know not where to find 'em.
Let 'em go to prison; they'll be forthcoming the better:
I have enough, and I will have my humour.
Ric. I knew there was no more good to be done upon him:
'Tis well I've this; heaven knows I never look'd for't.
Fran. What plaguy luck had I to be ensnar'd thus!

First Off. O, patience!
Fran. Pox o' your comfortable ignorance!

Enter BRANDINO *and* MARTINO.

Bran. Martino, we ride slow.
Mar. But we ride sure, sir;
Your hasty riders often come short home, master.
Bran. Bless this fair company!
Fran. Here he's again too;
I am both sham'd and cross'd.
Bran. Seest thou who's yonder, Martino?
Mar. We ride slow, I'll be sworn now, master.
Bran. How now, Francisco, art thou got before me?
Fran. Yes, thank my fortune, I am got before you.
Bran. What, no, in hold?
Ric. Ay, o' my troth, poor gentleman!
Your worship, sir, may do a good deed to bail him.
Bran. Why do not you do't then?
Mar. La, you, sir, now, my master has that honesty,
He's loath to take a good deed from you, sir.
Ric. I'll tell you why; I cannot, else I would, sir.
Fran. Luck, I beseech thee!
If he should be wrought to bail me now, to go to
His wife, 'twere happiness beyond expression. [*Aside.*
Bran. A matter but of controversy?
Ric. That's all, trust me, sir.
Bran. Francisco shall ne'er lie for't; he's my friend,
And I will bail him.
Mar. He's your secret friend, master;
Think upon that.

Bran. Give him his liberty, officers;
Upon my peril, he shall be forthcoming.
Fran. How I am bound to you!
First Suit. Know you whom you cross, sir?
'Tis at your sister's suit; be well advis'd, sir.
Bran. How, at my sister's suit? take him again then.
Fran. Why, sir, do you refuse me?
Bran. I'll not hear thee.
Ric. This is unkindly done, sir.
First Suit. 'Tis wisely done, sir.
Sec. Suit. Well shot, foul malice!
First Suit. Flattery stinks worse, sir.
Ric. You'll ne'er leave till I make you stink as bad, sir.
Fran. O Martino, have I this for my late kindness?
Mar. Alas! poor gentleman, dost complain to me?
Thou shalt not fare the worse for't.—Hark you, master,
Your sister's suit, said you?
Bran. Ay, sir, my wife's sister.
Mar. And shall that daunt you, master? think again:
Why, were't your mother's suit,—your mother's suit,
Mark what I say,—the dearest suit of all suits,
You're bound in conscience, sir, to bail this gentleman.
Bran. Yea, am I so? how prov'st thou that, Martino?
Mar. Have you forgot so soon what he did lately?
Has he not tried your wife to your hand, master,
To cut the throat of slander and suspicion?
And can you do too much for such a man?
Shall it be said, I serve an ingrateful master?

Bran. Never, Martino; I will bail him now,
And 'twere at my wife's suit.
Fran. 'Tis like to be so. [*Aside.*
Mar. And I his friend, to follow your example, master.
Fran. Precious Martino!
First Suit. You've done wondrous well, sir;
Your sister shall give you thanks.
Ric. This makes him mad, sir.
Sec. Suit. We'll follow't now to th' proof.
First Suit. Follow your humour out;
The widow shall find friends.
Sec. Suit. And so shall he, sir,
Money and means.
Ric. Hear you me that, old huddle![1]
Sec. Suit. Mind him not; follow me, and I'll supply thee; [*Exeunt* First Suitor *and* Officers.
Thou shalt give all thy lawyers double fees:
I've buried money enough to bury me,
And I will have my humour.
[*Exit with* RICARDO *and* ATTILIO.
Bran. Fare thee well once again, my dear Francisco;
I prithee, use my house.
Fran. It is my purpose, sir.
Bran. Nay, you must do't then; though I'm old, I'm free. [*Exit.*
Mar. And when you want a warrant come to me.
[*Exit.*

[1] A term of contempt for a sordid old man.

Fran. That will be shortly now, within this few hours.
This fell out strangely happy. Now to horse;
I shall be nighted: but an hour or two
Never breaks square[1] in love; he comes in time
That comes at all; absence is all love's crime. [*Exit.*

[1] "Never breaks square" = never gives offence. See Halliwell's Dictionary, *sub.* Squares.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The Country.

Enter OCCULTO, SILVIO, STRATIO, FIDUCIO, *and other* Thieves.

Occ. Come, come, let's watch th' event on yonder hill;
If he need help, we can relieve him suddenly.

Sil. Ay, and with safety too, the hill being watch'd, sir.

Occ. Have you the blue coats[1] and the beards?

Sil. They're here, sir.

Occ. Come, come away, then; a fine cock-shoot[2] evening. [*Exeunt.*

---

[1] They were to disguise themselves as serving-men.

[2] The commoner form is *cock-shut*. "A large net stretched across a glade, and so suspended upon poles as to be easily drawn together. Evidently from *cock* and *shut*, being employed to catch or shut in woodcocks. . . . These nets were chiefly used in the twilight of the evening when woodcocks go out to feed. Hence cock-shut time and cock-shut light were used to express the evening twilight."—*Nares*. The corruption *cock-shoot* is perhaps intentional, and the meaning may be—it is a fine evening for sport.

Enter LATROCINIO *and* MARTIA, *disguised as a man.*

Lat. [*sings*]. *Kuck before, and kuck behind, &c.*

Martia. Troth, you're the merriest and delightfull'st company, sir,
That ever traveller was blest withal;
I praise my fortune that I overtook you, sir.

Lat. Pish, I've a hundred of 'em.

Martia. And believe me, sir,
I'm infinitely taken with such things.

Lat. I see there's music in you; you kept time, methought,
Pretty and handsomely with your little hand there.

Martia. It only shows desire, but, troth, no skill, sir.

Lat. Well, while our horses walk down yonder hill, sir,
I'll have another for you.

Martia. It rids way pleasantly.

Lat. Le' me see now—one confounds another, sir—
You've heard this certainly, *Come, my dainty doxies?*[1]

Martia. O, that is all the country over, sir!
There's scarce a gentlewoman but has that prick'd.

Lat. Well, here comes one I'm sure you never heard, then. [*Sings.*

I keep my horse, I keep my whore,[2]
I take no rents, yet am not poor;

[1] We have the entire song in *More Dissemblers besides Women.*

[2] There is an early MS. copy of this song (with some slight variations) in Add. MS., 10,319, fol. 96.

I traverse all the land about,
And yet was born to never a foot;
With partridge plump, with woodcock fine,
I do at midnight often dine;
And if my whore be not in case,
My hostess' daughter has her place:
The maids sit up and watch their turns;
If I stay long, the tapster mourns;
The cookmaid has no mind to sin,
Though tempted by the chamberlin:[1]
But when I knock, O how they bustle!
The ostler yawns, the geldings justle;
If maid but sleep, O how they curse her!
And all this comes of, Deliver your purse, sir!

Martia. How, sir?

Lat. Few words: quickly, come, deliver your purse, sir!

Martia. You're not that kind of gentleman, I hope, sir,
To sing me out of my money?

Lat. 'Tis most fit
Art should be rewarded: you must pay your music, sir,
Where'er you come.

Martia. But not at your own carving.

Lat. Nor am I common in't: come, come, your purse, sir!

[1] Head waiter.

Martia. Say it should prove th' undoing of a gentleman?

Lat. Why, sir, do you look for more conscience in us than in usurers? young gentleman, you've small reason for that, i'faith.

Martia. There 'tis, and all I have [*gives purse*]; and, so truth comfort me,
All I know where to have!

Lat. Sir, that's not written
In my belief yet; search—'tis a fine evening,
Your horse can take no harm—I must have more, sir.

Martia. May my hopes perish, if you have not all, sir!
And more, I know, than your compassionate charity
Would keep from me, if you but felt my wants.

Lat. Search, and that speedily: if I take you in hand,
You'll find me rough; methinks men should be rul'd,
When they're so kindly spoke to: fie upon't!

Martia. Good fortune and my wit assist me then!
A thing I took in haste, and never thought on't.—[*Aside.*
Look, sir, I've search'd; here's all that I can find,
[*Presents a pistol.*
And you're so covetous, you'll have all, you say,
And I'm content you shall, being kindly spoke to.

Lat. A pox o' that young devil of a handful long,
That has fray'd many a tall thief from a rich purchase![1]

Martia. This and my money, sir, keeps company;

[1] Booty.

Where one goes, th' other must; assure your soul
They vow'd never to part.
Lat. Hold, I beseech you, sir!
Martia. You rob a prisoner's box [1] and you rob me, sir.
Lat. There 'tis again. [*Returns purse.*
Martia. I knew 'twould never prosper with you;
Fie, rob a younger brother? O, take heed, sir!
'Tis against nature that: perhaps your father
Was one, sir, or your uncle; it should seem so,
By the small means was left you, and less manners.
Go, keep you still before me; and, do you hear me?
To pass away the time to the next town,
I charge you, sir, sing all your songs for nothing.
Lat. O, horrible punishment! [*A song.*

Re-enter STRATIO, *disguised as a servant.*

Stra. Honest gentleman——
Martia. How now, what art thou?
Stra. Stand you in need of help?
I made all haste I could, my master charg'd me,
A knight of worship; he saw you first assaulted
From top of yonder hill.
Martia. Thanks, honest friend.
Lat. I taste this trick already. [*Aside and exit.*
Stra. Look, he's gone, sir;
Shall he be stopt? what is he?

[1] *i.e.*, the box let down by the prisoner through the prison-grating, to receive money or food from the charitable.

Martia. Let him go, sir;
He can rejoice in nothing, that's the comfort.
Stra. You have your purse still then?
Martia. Ay, thanks fair fortune
And this grim handful!
Stra. We were all so 'fraid o' you;
How my good lady cried, O help the gentleman!
'Tis a good woman that. But you're too mild, sir;
You should ha' mark'd him for a villain, faith,
Before h'ad gone, having so sound a means too.
Martia. Why, there's the jest, man; he had once my purse.
Stra. O villain! would you let him 'scape unmassacred?
Martia. Nay, hear me, sir, I made him yield it straight again,
And, so hope bless me, with an uncharg'd pistol.
Stra. Troth, I should laugh at that.
Martia. It was discharg'd, sir,
Before I meddled with't.
Stra. I'm glad to hear't. [*Seizes her.*
Martia. Why, how now? what's your will?
Stra. Ho, Latrocinio,
Occulto, Silvio!

Re-enter LATROCINIO, OCCULTO, SILVIO, FIDUCIO, *and other* Thieves.

Lat. What, are you caught, sir?
Stra. The pistol cannot speak.

Lat. He was too young.
I ever thought he could not; yet I fear'd him.

Martia. You've found out ways too merciless to betray,
Under the veil of friendship and of charity.

Lat. Away, sirs, bear him into th' next copse and strip him.

Stra. Brandino's copse, the justice?

Lat. Best of all, sir, a man of law; a spider lies unsuspected in the corner of a buckram bag, man.

Martia. What seek [you, sirs? take all, and use no cruelty.

Lat. You shall have songs enough.

Song by LATROCINIO *and the other* Thieves.

How round the world goes, and everything that's in it!
The tides of gold and silver ebb and flow in a minute:
From the usurer to his sons there['s] a current swiftly runs;
From the sons to queans in chief, from the gallant to the thief,
From the thief unto his host, from the host to husbandmen;
From the country to the court; and so it comes to us agen.
How round the world goes, and everything that's in it!
The tides of gold and silver ebb and flow in a minute.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Before BRANDINO'S *House.*

Enter PHILIPPA *and* VIOLETTA *above, at a window.*

Phil. What time of night is't?
Vio. Time of night do you call't?
It is so late, 'tis almost early, mistress.
Phil. Fie on him! there's no looking for him then;
Why, sure this gentleman apprehends me not.
Vio. 'Tis happy then you're rid of such a fool, mistress.
Phil. Nay, sure, wench, if he find me not out in this,
Which were a beaten path to any wise man,
I'll never trust him with my reputation;
Therefore I made this trial of his wit:
If he cannot conceive what's good for himself,
He will worse understand what's good for me.
Vio. But suppose, mistress, as it may be likely,
He never saw your letter?
Phil. How thou pliest me
With suppositions! why, I tell thee, wench,
'Tis equally as impossible for my husband
To keep it from him as to be young again,
Or as his first wife knew him, which he brags on,
For bearing children by him.
Vio. There's no remedy then;
I must conclude Francisco is an ass.
Phil. I would my letter, wench, were here again!

I'd know him wiser ere I sent him one,
And travel some five year first.
Vio. So h'ad need, methinks,
To understand the words; methinks the words
Themselves should make him do't, had he but the perceiverance [1]
Of a cock-sparrow, that will come at Philip,[2]
And can nor write nor read, poor fool! this coxcomb
He can do both, and your name's but Philippa;
And yet to see, if he can come when's call'd!
Phil. He never shall be call'd again for me, sirrah.[3]
Well, as hard as the world goes, we'll have a song, wench,
We'll not sit up for nothing.
Vio. That's poor comfort though.
Phil. Better than any's brought, for aught I see yet:
So set to your lute. [*They sing.*

Phil. If in this question I propound to thee
Be any, any choice,
Let me have thy voice.
Vio. You shall most free.

---

[1] So Dyce for old ed.'s "perseverance." In the Addenda to his *Beaumont and Fletcher*, he quotes from one of the poems appended to Matthew Grove's *History of Pelops and Hippodamia*, 1587:—

> "And when *perceiverance* did him take
> That every wight was gone," &c. Sig. H. iiii.

[2] Philip or Phip was the common name for a sparrow. Skelton in his *Elegy on Philip Sparrow* writes—

> "And when I said *Phip, Phip,*
> Then he would leap and skip,
> And take me by the lip."

[3] A term frequently applied to women.

Phil. Which hadst thou rather be,
If thou might choose thy life,
A fool's, a fool's mistress,
Or an old man's wife?
Vio. The choice is hard, I know not which is best;
One ill you're bound to, and I think that's least.
Phil. But being not bound, my dearest sweet,
I could shake off the other.
Vio. Then as you lose your sport by one,
You lose your name by t'other.
Phil. You counsel well, but love refuses
What good counsel often chooses. [*Exeunt above.*

Enter MARTIA *in a shirt.*

Martia. I ha' got myself unbound yet; merciless villains,
I never felt such hardness since life dwelt in me;
'Tis for my sins. That light in yonder window,
That was my only comfort in the woods,
Which oft the trembling of a leaf would lose me,
Has brought me thus far; yet I cannot hope
For succour in this plight, the world's so pitiless,
And every one will fear or doubt me now:
To knock will be too bold; I'll to the gate,
And listen if I can hear any stirring.

Enter FRANCISCO.

Fran. Was ever man so cross'd? no, 'tis but sweat, sure,
Or the dew dropping from the leaves above me;

I thought't had bled again. These wenching businesses
Are strange unlucky things and fatal fooleries;
No mar'l so many gallants die ere thirty;
'Tis able to vex out a man's heart in five year,
The crosses that belong to't: first, arrested,
That set me back two mangy hours at least;
Yet that's a thing my heat could have forgiven,
Because arresting, in what kind soever,
Is a most gentleman-like affliction;
But here, within a mile o' th' town, forsooth,
And two mile off this place, when a man's oath
Might ha' been taken for his own security,
And his thoughts brisk and set upon the business,
To light upon a roguy flight of thieves!
Pox on 'em, here's the length of one of their whittles:[1]
But one of my dear rascals I pursu'd so,
The gaol has him, and he shall bring out's fellows.
Had ever young man's love such crooked fortune?
I'm glad I'm so near yet; the surgeon bade me too
Have a great care; I shall ne'er think of that now.
Martia. One of the thieves come back again? I'll stand close;
He dares not wrong me now, so near the house,
And call in vain 'tis, till I see him offer't.
Fran. 'Life, what should that be? a prodigious thing
Stands just as I should enter, in that shape too
Which always appears terrible.
Whate'er it be, it is made strong against me

[1] Clasp-knives.—Old ed. "whistles:" the correction was made by Dyce.

By my ill purpose; for 'tis man's own sin
That puts on armour upon all his evils,
And gives them strength to strike him. Were it less
Than what it is, my guilt would make it serve:
A wicked man's own shadow has distracted him.
Were this a business now to save an honour,
As 'tis to spoil one, I would pass this then,
Stuck all hell's horrors i' thee: now I dare not.
Why may't not be the spirit of my father,
That lov'd this man so well, whom I make haste
Now to abuse? and I've been cross'd about it
Most fearfully hitherto, if I well think on't;
Scap'd death but lately too, nay, most miraculously.
And what does fond man venture all these ills for,
That may so sweetly rest in honest peace?
For that which, being obtain'd, is as he was
To his own sense, but remov'd nearer still
To death eternal. What delight has man
Now at this present for his pleasant sin
Of yesterday's committing? 'las, 'tis vanish'd,
And nothing but the sting remains with him!
The kind man bail'd me too; I will not do't now,
And 'twere but only that. How blest were man
Might he but have his end appear still to him,
That he might read his actions i' th' event!
'Twould make him write true, though he never meant.
Whose check soe'er thou art, father's, or friend's,
Or enemy's, I thank thee; peace requite thee!
Light, and the lighter mistress, both farewell!
He keeps his promise best that breaks with hell. [*Exit.*

Martia. He's gone to call the rest, and makes all speed;
I'll knock, whate'er befalls, to please my fears,
For no compassion can be less than theirs.
[*Knocks at the door.*

Re-enter PHILIPPA *and* VIOLETTA *above.*

Phil. He's come, he's come!—O, are you come at last, sir?
Make little noise.—Away, he'll knock again else.
[*Exit above with* VIOLETTA.

Martia. I should have been at Istria, by daybreak too;
Near to Valeria's house, the wealthy widow's;
There waits one purposely to do me good.
What will become of me?

Enter VIOLETTA.

Vio. O, you are a sweet gallant! this your hour?
Give me your hand; come, come, sir, follow me,
I'll bring you to light presently: softly, softly, sir.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Room in BRANDINO'S *House.*

Enter PHILIPPA.

Phil. I should ha' given him up to all my thoughts
The dullest young man, if he had not found it;
So short of apprehension and so worthless,

He were not fit for woman's fellowship;
I've been at cost too for a banquet for him:
Why, 'twould ha' kill'd my heart, and most especially
To think that man should ha' no more conceit;
I should ha' thought the worse on's wit for ever,
And blam'd mine own for too much forwardness.

Enter VIOLETTA.

Vio. O mistress, mistress!
Phil. How now, what's the news?
Vio. O, I was out of my wits for a minute and a half!
Phil. Hah!
Vio. They are scarce settled yet, mistress.
Phil. What's the matter?
Vio. Do you ask that seriously?
Did you not hear me squeak?
Phil. How? sure thou art
Out of thy wits indeed.
Vio. O, I'm well now
To what I was, mistress.
Phil. Why, where's the gentleman?
Vio. The gentleman's forthcoming, and a lovely one,
But not Francisco.
Phil. What say'st? not Francisco?
Vio. Pish, he's a coxcomb! think not on him, mistress.
Phil. What's all this?
Vio. I've often heard you say, ye'd rather have
A wise man in his shirt than a fool feather'd;

And now fortune has sent you one, a sweet young gentleman,
Robb'd even to nothing, but what first he brought with him:
The slaves had stript him to the very shirt, mistress;
I think it was a shirt; I know not well,
For gallants wear both[1] now-a-days.

Phil. This is strange.

Vio. But for a face, a hand, and as much skin
As I durst look upon, he's a most sweet one;
Francisco is a child of Egypt[2] to him:
I could not but, in pity to th' poor gentleman,
Fetch him down one of my old master's suits.

Phil. 'Twas charitably done.

Vio. You'd say, mistress, if you had seen him as I did. Sweet youth! I'll be sworn, mistress, he's the loveliest, properest[3] young gentleman, and so you'll say yourself, if my master's clothes do not spoil him, that's all the fear now; I would't had been your luck to have seen him without 'em, but for scaring on you.

Phil. Go, prithee, fetch him in, whom thou commend'st so. [*Exit* VIOLETTA.

Since fortune sends him, surely we'll make much on him;
And better he deserves our love and welcome
Than the respectless fellow 'twas prepar'd for:
Yet if he please mine eye never so happily,
I will have trial of his wit and faith

[1] Shirts and smocks. Cf. *More Dissemblers besides Women*, i. 4.
[2] "Child of Egypt" = gipsy. [3] Handsomest.

Before I make him partner with my honour.
'Twas just Francisco's case, and he deceiv'd me;
I'll take more heed o' th' next for't: perhaps now,
To furnish his distress, he will appear
Full of fair, promising courtship; but I'll prove him then
For a next meeting, when he needs me not,
And see what he performs then when the storm
Of his so rude misfortunes is blown over,
And he himself again. A distrest man's flatteries
Are like vows made in drink, or bonds in prison;
There's poor assurance in 'em: when he's from me,
And in's own power, then I shall see his love.
'Mass, here he comes.

Enter MARTIA *in* BRANDINO'S *clothes, and* VIOLETTA.

Martia. Never was star-cross'd gentleman
More happy in a courteous virgin's love
Than I in yours.

Vio. I'm sorry they're no better for you;
I wish'd 'em handsomer and more in fashion,
But truly, sir, our house affords it not:
There is a suit of our clerk's hangs i' th' garret,
But that's far worse than this, if I may judge
With modesty of men's matters.

Martia. I deserve not this,
Dear and kind gentlewoman. Is yond your mistress?

Phil. Why, trust me, here's my husband young again!—
It is no sin to welcome you, sweet gentleman.

Martia. I am so much indebted, courteous lady,
To the unmatched charity of your house,
My thanks are such poor things they would but shame me.
Phil. Beshrew thy heart for bringing o' him! I fear me
I have found wit enough already in him.
If I could truly but resolve myself
My husband was thus handsome at nineteen,
Troth, I should think the better of him at fourscore now.
Vio. Nay, mistress, what would he be, were he in fashion—
A hempen curse on those that put him out on't!—
That now appears so handsome and so comely
In clothes able to make a man an unbeliever,
And good for nothing but for shift, or so,
If a man chance to fall i' th' ditch with better?
This is the best that ever I mark'd in 'em,—
A man may make him ready[1] in such clothes
Without a candle.
Phil. Ay, for shame of himself, wench.
Vio. My master does it oft in winter mornings,
And never sees himself till he be ready.
Phil. No, nor then neither, as he should do, wench.—
I'm sorry, gentle sir, we cannot show you
A courtesy in all points answerable
To your undoubted worth: your name, I crave, sir.

[1] "Make him ready" = dress himself.

Martia. Ansaldo, lady.
Phil. 'Tis a noble name, sir.
Martia. The most unfortunate now!
Vio. So do I think truly,
As long as that suit's on.
Phil. The most unfitting
And unprovided'st, sir, of all our courtesies,
I do presume is that you've pass'd already;
Your pardon but for that, and we're encourag'd.
Martia. My faithful service, lady.
Phil. Please you, sir, to taste the next,
A poor slight banquet, for sure I think you were
Unluckily prevented of your supper, sir.
Martia. My fortune makes me more than amends, lady,
In your sweet kindness, which so nobly shown to me,
It makes me bold to speak my occasions to you:
I am this morning, that with clearness now
So cheerfully hastens me, to meet a friend
Upon my state's establishing, and the place
Ten mile from hence: O, I am forc'd unwillingly
To crave your leave for't, which done, I return
In service plentiful.
Phil. Is't so important?
Martia. If I should fail, as much as my undoing.
Phil. I think too well of you, t' undo you, sir,
Upon this small acquaintance.
Martia. My great happiness!
Phil. But when should I be sure of you here again, sir?

Martia. As fast as speed can possibly return me.
Phil. You will not fail?
Martia. May never wish go well with me then!
Phil. There's to bear charges, sir. [*Gives purse.*
Martia. Courtesy dwells in you:
I brought my horse up with me from the woods,
That's all the good they left me, 'gainst their wills too.
May your kind breast never want comfort, lady,
But still supplied as liberally as you give!
Phil. Farewell, sir, and be faithful.
Martia. Time shall prove me. [*Exit.*
Phil. In my opinion, now, this young man's likeliest
To keep his word; he's modest, wise, and courteous,
He has the language of an honest soul in him;
A woman's reputation may lie safe there,
I'm much deceiv'd else; h'as a faithful eye,
If it be well observ'd.
Vio. Good speed be with thee, sir!—
He puts him to't, i'faith. [*Looking out.*
Phil. Violetta.
Vio. Mistress?
Phil. Alas, what have we done, wench?
Vio. What's the matter, mistress?
Phil. Run, run, call him again; he must stay, tell him,
Though it be upon's undoing; we're undone else;
Your master's clothes, they're known the country over.
Vio. Now, by this light, that's true, and well remember'd;
But there's no calling of him, he's out of sight now.
Phil. O, what will people think?

Vio. What can they think, mistress?
The gentleman has the worst on't: were I he now,
I'd make this ten mile forty mile about,
Before I'd ride through any market-town with 'em.
Phil. Will he be careful, think'st?
Vio. My life for yours, mistress.
Phil. I shall long mightily to see him agen.
Vio. And so shall I; I shall ne'er laugh till then.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Near VALERIA'S *House.*

Enter RICARDO *and* Second Suitor *at one door, and* VALERIA *and* First Suitor *at the other.*

Ric. It goes well hitherto, my sweet protector.
Sec. Suit. Ay, and shall still to th' end, to th' end, my honey:
Wherefore have I enough, but to have't go well, sir?
First Suit. My whole state on't, thou overthrow'st him, widow.
Val. I hope well still, sir.
First Suit. Hope? be certain, wench:
I make no question now but thou art mine,
As sure as if I had thee in thy night-gear.
Val. Byrlady, that I doubt, sir.
First Suit. O, 'tis clear, wench,
By one thing that I mark'd.
Val. What's that, good, sweet sir?
First Suit. A thing that never fail'd me.
Val. Good sir, what?

First Suit. I heard our counsellor speak a word of comfort,
Invita voluntate; ha, that's he, wench,
The word of words, the precious chief, i'faith!
Val. Invita voluntate; what's the meaning, sir?
First Suit. Nay, there I leave you, but assure you thus much,
I never heard him speak that word i' my life,
But the cause went on's side, that I mark'd ever.
Sec. Suit. Do, do, and spare not: thou wouldst talk with her?
Ric. Yes, with your leave and liking.
Sec. Suit. Do, my adoption,
My chosen child; and thou hold'st so obedient,
Sure thou wilt live and cozen all my kindred.
Ric. A child's[1] part in your love, that's my ambition, sir.
Sec. Suit. Go, and deserve it then; please me well now;
I love wrangling a' life,[2] boy, there's my delight;
I have no other venery but vexation,

---

[1] Cf. Day's *Law Tricks*, iv. 2:—"Faith, my lord, I have done a child's part and almost spent a *child's part* to draw him to society." So Heywood:—

"Thou that hoards up
The fry of silver pence and halfpennies
With show of charity to give the poor,
But putt'st them to increase, where in short time
They grow a *child's part*, or a daughter's portion."
—(Works, ed. Pearson, ii. 29.)

[2] As my life.

That's all, my honey,[1] now: smartly now to her;
I have enough, and I will have my humour.
Ric. This need not ha' been, widow.
Val. You say right, sir;
No, nor your treachery, your close conspiracy
Against me for my wealth, need not ha' been neither.
Ric. I had you fairly; I scorn treachery
To your woman that I never meant to marry,
Much more to you, whom I reserv'd for wife.
Val. How? wife!
Ric. Ay, wife, wife, widow; be not asham'd on't,
It's the best calling ever woman came to,
And all your grace indeed, brag as you list.
Sec. Suit. Ha, ha!
Val. I grant you, sir, but not to be your wife.
First Suit. O, O!
Ric. Not mine? I think 'tis the best bargain
That e'er thou mad'st i' thy life, or ever shall again,
When my head's laid, but that's not yet this threescore year;
Let's talk of nearer matters.
Val. You're as near, sir,
As e'er you're like to be, if law can right me.
Ric. Now, before conscience, you're a wilful housewife.
Val. How?

[1] Nowadays such a term of endearment would only be applied (if applied at all) by a lover to his mistress; but it appears to have been once a not uncommon form of address. Some verses "To a Friend upon his Marriage" in *Musarum Deliciæ* begin:—

"Since last I writ I hear, dear *honey*,
Thou hast committed matrimony.'

Ric. Ay, and I fear you spend my goods lavishly.
Val. Your goods?
Ric. I shall miss much, I doubt me,
When I come to look over the inventory.
Val. I'll give you my word you shall, sir.
Ric. Look to't, widow;
A night may come will call you to account for't.
Val. O, if you had me now, sir, in this heat,
I do but think how you'd be reveng'd on me!
Ric. Ay, may I perish else; if I would not get
Three children at a birth, and I could, o' thee!
First Suit. Take off your youngster there.
Sec. Suit. Take off your widow first,
He shall have the last word, I pay for't dearly.—
To her again, sweet boy, that side's the weaker:
I have enough, and I will have my humour.

Enter BRANDINO *and* MARTINO.

Val. O brother, see I'm up to th' ears in law here!
Look, copy [1] upon copy.
Bran. 'Twere grief enough.
If a man did but hear on't, but I am
In pain to see it.
Val. What, sore eyes still, brother?
Bran. Worse and worse, sister; the old woman's water
Does me no good.

---

1 "'*i.e.*, plenty, a sense in which Ben Jonson frequently used *copy*, from *copia*. Hence we may infer that he wrote this portion of the play. The next scene is in his best manner.'—*Collier*. Surely in the text 'copy upon copy' is to be understood of law-papers."—*Dyce*.

Val. Why, 't'as help'd many, sir.
Bran. It helps not me, I'm sure.
Mar. O, O !
Val. What, ails Martino, too ?
Mar. O, O, the toothache, the toothache !
Bran. Ah, poor worm ! this he endures for me now :
There beats not a more mutual pulse of passion
In a kind husband when his wife breeds child
Than in Martino ; I ha' marked it ever ;
He breeds all my pains in's teeth still, and to quit[1] me,
It is his eye-tooth too.
Mar. Ay, ay, ay, ay.
Val. Where did I hear late of a skilful fellow,
Good for all kind of maladies ? true, true, sir ;
His flag[2] hangs out in town here i' th' Cross Inn,
With admirable cures of all conditions ;
It shows him a great travelling and learn'd empiric.
Bran. We'll both to him, Martino.
Val. Hark you, brother ;
Perhaps you may prevail, as one indifferent.
First Suit. Ay, about that, sweet widow.
Val. True ; speak low, sir.
Bran. Well, what's the business ? say, say,
Val. Marry, this, brother ;

---

[1] Be level with.

[2] It was the custom for quacksalvers to hang out a flag when they took up their quarters in a town. Cf. *Volpone*, ii. 1 :—"Sixpence it will cost you, or six hundred pound ; expect no lower price, for *by the banner of my front* I will not bate a bagatine."

Call the young man aside from the old wolf there,
And whisper in his ear a thousand dollars,
If he will vanish and let fall the suit,
And never put's to no more cost and trouble.
First Suit. Say me those words, good sir, I'll make 'em worth
A chain of gold to you at your sister's wedding.
Bran. I shall do much for that.

Enter VIOLETTA.

Val. Welcome, sweetheart,
Thou com'st most happily; I'm bold to send for thee
To make a purpose good.
Vio. I take delight, forsooth,
In any such employment.
First Suit. Good wench, trust me.
Ric. How, sir, let fall the suit? 'life, I'll go naked first.
Bran. A thousand dollars, sir; think upon them.
Ric. Why, they're but a thousand dollars, when they're thought on.
Bran. A good round sum.
Ric. A good round widow's better;
There's meat and money too. I have been bought
Out of my lands and yielded; but, sir, scorn
To be bought out of my affection.
Bran. Why, here's even just my university spirit;
I priz'd a piece of red deer above gold then.
Ric. My patron would be mad, and he should hear on't.

Mar. I pray, what's good, sir, for a wicked tooth?
Ric. Hang'd, drawn, and quartering: is't a hollow one?
Mar. Ay, 'tis a hollow one.
Ric. Then take the powder
Of a burnt warrant, mix'd with oil of felon.
Mar. Why sure you mock me.
Ric. Troth, I think I do, sir.
Sec. Suit. Come hither, honey; what's the news? in whispers.
Bran. He will not be bought out.
Val. No? that's strange, brother:
Pray take a little pains about this project then,
And try what that effects.
Bran. I like this better.—
Look you, sweet gentles, see what I produce here
For amity's sake and peace, to end all controversy;
This gentlewoman, my charge, left by her friends,
Whom for her person and her portion
I could bestow most richly, but in pity
To her affection, which lies bent at you, sir,
I am content to yield to her desire.
Ric. At me?
Bran. But for this jar, 't had ne'er been offer'd.
I bring you flesh and money, a rich heir,
And a maid too, and that's a thing worth thanks, sir;
Nay, one that has rid fifteen mile this morning
For your love only.
Sec. Suit. Honey, hearken after her;
Being rich, I can have all my money there;

Ease my purse well, and never wage law further:
I have enough, yet I will have my humour.
Ric. Do you love me, forsooth?
Vio. O, infinitely!
Ric. I do not ask thee, that I meant to have thee,
But only to know what came in thy head to love me.
Vio. My time was come, sir; that's all I can say.
Ric. 'Las, poor soul! where didst thou love me first, prithee?
Vio. In happy hour be't spoke, out at a window, sir.
Ric. A window? prithee, clap't to, and call it in again:
What was I doing then, should make thee love me?
Vio. Twirling your band-string, which, methought, became you
So generously well.
Ric. 'Twas a good quality to choose a husband for; that love was likely to be tied in matrimony that begun in a band-string; yet I ha' known as much come to pass ere now upon a tassel. Fare you well, sister; I may be cozened in a maid, I cannot in a widow.
Sec. Suit. Art thou come home again? stick'st thou there still?
I will defend thee still then.
First Suit. Sir, your malice
Will have enough on't.
Sec. Suit. I will have my humour.
First Suit. Beggary will prove the sponge.
Sec. Suit. Sponge i' thy gascoyns,
Thy gally-gascoyns[1] there!

[1] Loose breeches.

Ric. Ha, brave protector!

Bran. I thought 'twould come to open wars again:
Let 'em agree as they will, two testy fops!
I'll have a care of mine eyes.

Mar. I of my chops. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in the Cross Inn.

Enter LATROCINIO *disguised as an empiric, and* OCCULTO *as his man.*

Lat. Away, out with the banner! send's good luck to-day!

Occ. I warrant you; your name's spread, sir, for an empiric: [*Hanging up a banner of cures and diseases.*
There's an old mason troubled with the stone
Has sent to you this morning for your counsel;
He would have ease fain.

Lat. Marry, I cannot blame him, sir;
But how he will come by't, there lies the question.

Occ. You must do somewhat, sir; for he's swoln most piteously;
Has urine in him now was brew'd last March.

Lat. 'Twill be rich gear for dyers.

Occ. I would 'twere come to that, sir.

Lat. Le' me see,
I'll send him a whole musket-charge of gunpowder.[1]

[1] "So in *The Honest Lawyer. Acted by the Qveenes Maiesties Servants. Written by S. S.* 1616. 4to:—

Occ. Gunpowder?
What, sir, to break the stone?
Lat. Ay, by my faith, sir,
It is the likeliest thing I know to do't;
I'm sure it breaks stone-walls and castles down;
I see no reason but't should break the stone.
Occ. Nay, use your pleasure, sir.
Lat. Troth, if that do not,
I ha' nothing else that will.
Occ. I know that too.
Lat. Why then thou'rt a coxcomb to make question on't.
Go call in all the rest, I've employment for them.
[*Exit* OCCULTO.
When the highways grow thin with travellers,
And few portmanteaus stirring, as all trades
Have their dead time we see, thievery poor takings,
And lechery cold doings, and so forwards still;
Then do I take my inn, and those curmudgeons
Whose purses I can never get abroad,
I take 'em at more ease here i' my chamber,
And make 'em come to me; it's more state-like too.
Hang him that has but one way to his trade!
He's like a mouth that eats but on one side,

'*Valentine.* What is't, Sir, that my Art cannot extend to?
Gripe. The stone, the stone: I am pittifully grip'd with the stone. . .
Valentine. . . . . . .
Let's see. Methinks a little Gun-powder
Should haue some strange relation to this fit.
I haue seene Gun-powder oft driue out stones
From Forts and Castle-walls,' &c."—*Dyce.*

And half-cozens his belly, 'specially if he dine 'mong shavers
And both-handed feeders.—Stratio, Silvio, and Fiducio!

Enter SILVIO, STRATIO, *and* FIDUCIO.

I will have none left out, there's parts for you.
Sil. For us? pray let us have 'em.
Lat. Change yourselves
With all speed possible into several shapes,
Far from your own: as, you a farmer, sir;
A grazier you; and you may be a miller.
Fid. O no, a miller comes too near a thief;
That may spoil all again.
Lat. Some country tailor then.
Fid. That's near enough, byrlady, yet I'll venture that;
The miller's a white[1] devil; he wears his theft
Like innocence in badges most apparently
Upon his nose, sometimes between his lips;
The tailor modestly between his legs.
Lat. Why, pray, do you 'present that modest thief, then;
And hark you, for the purpose.
Sil. 'Twill improve you, sir.
Lat. 'Twill get believers, believe that, my masters,
Repute and confidence, and make all things clearer;
When you see any come, repair you to me,
As samples of my skill: there are few arts

[1] See note 3, vol. iv. p. 220.

But have their shadows, sirs, to set 'em off;
Then where the art itself is but a shadow,
What need is there, my friends! Make haste, away, sirs. [*Exeunt* SILVIO, STRATIO, *and* FIDUCIO.

Re-enter OCCULTO.

Occ. Where are you, sir?
Lat. Not far, man; what's the news?
Occ. Th' old justice, sir, whom we robb'd once by moonlight,
And bound his man and he in haycock time
With a rope made of horse-meat, and in pity
Left their mares by 'em, which, I think, ere midnight
Did eat their hay-bound masters both at liberty——
Lat. 'Life, what of him, man?
Occ. He's inquiring earnestly
For the great man of art, indeed for you, sir:
Therefore withdraw, sweet sir; make yourself dainty now,
And that's three parts of any profession.
Lat. I have enough on't. [*Exit.*

Enter MARTIA *in* BRANDINO'S *clothes.*

Occ. How now, what thing's this?
Now, by this light, the second part o' th' justice
Newly reviv'd, with never a hair on's face.
It should be the first rather by his smoothness,
But I ha' known the first part written last:[1]

[1] "This alludes to the first and second parts of historical plays and tragedies, which had been so much in fashion. It has been ascertained

'Tis he, or let me perish, the young gentleman
We robb'd and stript; but I am far from knowledge now. [*Aside.* 70

Martia. One word, I pray, sir.

Occ. With me, gentle sir?

Martia. Was there not lately seen about these parts, sir,
A knot of fellows, whose conditions
Are privily suspected?

Occ. Why do you ask, sir?

Martia. There was a poor young gentleman robb'd last night.

Occ. Robb'd?

Martia. Stript of all, i'faith.

Occ. O beastly rascals!
'Las, what was he?

Martia. Look o' me, and know him, sir.

Occ. Hard-hearted villains! strip? troth, when I saw you,
Methought those clothes were never made for you, sir.

Martia. Want made me glad o' 'em.

---

in more than one instance, that the first part of a successful play was written after the second had met with applause."—*Collier.* From entries in Henslowe's diary, we learn that Chettle, after completing *Cardinal Wolsey's Life*, immediately set to work on a play called *The Rising of Cardinal Wolsey* (*Diary*, p. 202), intended as an introduction to the earlier play. So Dekker, after writing with Michael Drayton parts 1, 2, and 3 of *The Civil Wars in France*, made a fresh start on his own account with *The First Introduction of the Civil Wars in France* (*Diary*, pp. 134, 137, 139, 142).

Occ. Send you better fortunes, sir!—
That we may have a bout with you once again. [*Aside.*
Martia. I thank you for your wish of love, kind sir.
Occ. 'Tis with my heart, i'faith; now store of coin
And better clothes be with you!
Martia. There's some honest yet,
And charitably-minded. How, what's here to do?
[*Reads on the banner.*

Here within this place is cur'd
All the griefs that were ever endur'd.

Nay, there thou liest; I endur'd one last night
Thou canst not cure this morning; a strange promiser!
[*Reads.*

Palsy, gout, hydropic humour,
Breath that stinks beyond perfumer,
Fistula in ano, ulcer, megrim,
Or what disease soe'er beleaguer 'em,
Stone, rupture, squinancy,[1] *imposthume;*
Yet too dear it shall not cost 'em.

That's conscionably said, i'faith. [*Reads.*

In brief, you cannot, I assure you,
Be unsound so fast as I can cure you.

Byrlady, you shall pardon me, I'll not try't, sir.

Enter BRANDINO *and* MARTINO.

Bran. Martino, is not yond my hinder parts?
Mar. Yes, and your fore parts too, sir.
Bran. I trow so;

[1] Quinsey.

I never saw my hind parts in my life else,
No, nor my fore ones neither.—What are you, sir?
Are you a justice, pray?

Martia. A justice? no, truly.

Bran. How came this suit to you, then?

Martia. How this suit?
Why, must he needs be a justice, sir, that wears it?

Bran. You'll find it so; 'twas made for nobody else:
I paid for't.

Martia. O strange fortune! I've undone
The charitable woman. [*Aside.*

Bran. He'll be gone.
Martino, hold him fast, I'll call for aid.

Martia. Hold me? O curse of fate!

[*Strikes* MARTINO.

Mar. O master, master!

Bran. What ails Martino?

Mar. In my conscience,
Has beat out the wrong tooth; I feel it now
Three degrees off.

Bran. O slave, spoil'd a fine penman!

Martia. He lack'd good manners, though; lay hands o' me?
I scorn all the deserts that belong to it.

Re-enter LATROCINIO.

Lat. Why, how now? what's the broil?

Bran. The man of art,
I take you, sir, to be.

Lat. I'm the professor
Of those slight cures you read of in the banner.
Bran. Our business was to you, most skilful sir;
But in the way to you, right worshipful,
I met a thief.
Lat. A thief?
Bran. With my clothes on, sir:
Let but the hose be search'd, I'll pawn my life
There's yet the tailor's bill in one o' th' pockets,
And a white thimble that I found i' moonlight—
Thou saw'st me when I put it in, Martino?
Mar. Oy, oy!
Bran. O, has spoil'd
The worthiest clerk that e'er drew warrant here!
Lat. Sir, you're a stranger, but I must deal plain with you;
That suit of clothes must needs come oddly to you.
Martia. I dare not say which way, that's my affliction. [*Aside.*
Lat. Is not your worship's name signor Brandino, sir?
Bran. It has been so these threescore year[s] and upwards.
Lat. I heard there was a robbery done last night
Near to your house.
Martia. You heard a truth then, sir,
And I the man was robb'd.
Lat. Ah, that's too gross!—
Send him away for fear of farther mischief;
I do not like him, he's a cunning knave.

Bran. I want but aid.
Lat. Within there!

Enter Servants.

Bran. Seize upon
That impudent thief.
Martia. Then hear me speak.
Bran. Away!
I'll neither hear thee speak, nor wear those clothes again.—
To prison with the varlet!
Martia. How am I punish'd!
Bran. I'll make thee bring out all before I leave thee.
[*Exeunt* Servants *with* MARTIA.
Lat. You've took an excellent course with this bold villain, sir.
Bran. I'm sworn for service to the commonwealth, sir.

Enter SILVIO, STRATIO, *and* FIDUCIO *disguised.*

What are these, learned sir?
Lat. O, they're my patients.—
Good morrow, gout, rupture, and palsy.
Stra. 'Tis farewell gout almost, I thank your worship.
Lat. What, no, you cannot part so soon, I hope?
You came but lately to me.
Stra. But most happily;
I can go near to leap, sir. [*Leaps.*
Lat. What, you cannot?

Away, I say! take heed, be not too vent'rous though;
I've had you but three days, remember that.
Stra. Those three are better than three hundred, sir.
[*Leaps.*
Lat. Yet again?
Stra. Ease takes pleasure to be known, sir.
Lat. You with the rupture there, *hernia in scrotum*,
Pray let me see your space[1] this morning; walk, sir,
I'll take your distance straight; 'twas F. O. yesterday:
Ah, sirrah, here's a simple alteration!
Secundo gradu, ye F. U. already;
Here's a most happy change. Be of good comfort, sir;
Your knees are come within three inches now
Of one another; by to-morrow noon,
I'll make 'em kiss and jostle.
Sil. Bless your worship!
Bran. You've a hundred prayers in a morning, sir.
Lat. Faith, we've a few to pass away the day with.—
Tailor, you had a stitch?
Fid. O, good your worship,
I have had none since Easter: were I rid
But of this whoreson palsy, I were happy;
I cannot thread my needle.
Lat. No? that's hard;
I never mark'd so much.
Fid. It comes by fits, sir.

[1] "Altered by editors to 'pace'—but, I believe, wrongly."—*Dyce.*

Lat. Alas, poor man!—What would your worship say now
To see me help this fellow at an instant?
Bran. And make him firm from shaking?
Lat. As a steeple,
From the disease on't.
Bran. 'Tis to me miraculous.
Lat. You with your whoremaster disease, come hither;
Here, take me this round glass, and hold it steadfast;
[*Gives glass.*
Yet more, sir; yet, I say; so.
Bran. Admirable!
Lat. Go, live, and thread thy needle.
Bran. Here, Martino:—
Alas, poor fool, his mouth is full of praises,
And cannot utter 'em.
Lat. No? what's the malady?
Bran. The fury of a tooth.
Lat. A tooth? ha, ha!
I thought 't had been some gangrene, fistula,
Canker, or ramex.
Bran. No, it's enough as 'tis, sir.
Lat. My man shall ease that straight.—Sit you down there, sir.— [MARTINO *seats himself.*
Take the tooth, sirrah, daintily, insensibly—
But what's your worship's malady? that's for me, sir.
Bran. Marry, pray, look you, sir; your worship's counsel
About mine eyes.

Lat. Sore eyes? that's nothing too, sir.
Bran. Byrlady, I that feel it think it somewhat.
Lat. Have you no convulsions, pricking aches, sir,
Ruptures, or apostemates?
Bran. No, by my faith, sir,
Nor do I desire to have 'em.
Lat. Those are cures;
There do I win my fame, sir.—Quickly, sirrah,
Reach me the eye-cup hither.
[OCCULTO *gives him the eye-cup.*
Do you make water well, sir?
Bran. I'm all well there.
Lat. You feel no grief i' th' kidney?
Bran. Sound, sound, sound, sir.
Lat. O, here's a breath, sir, I must talk withal,
One of these mornings.
Bran. There I think, i'faith,
I am to blame indeed, and my wife's words
Are come to pass, sir.
Mar. O, O! 'tis not that, tis not that!
[*While* OCCULTO *gives a pull at one of his teeth.*
It is the next beyond it; there, there, there!
Occ. The best have their mistakings: now I'll fit you, sir.
Bran. What's that, sweet sir, that comforts with his coolness?
Lat. O, sovereign gear: wink hard, and keep it in, sir.
[*While he applies the eye-cup to* BRANDINO, *he picks his pocket.*

Mar. O, O, O!

Occ. Nay, here he goes; one twitch more, and he comes, sir.

[*While he draws one of* MARTINO'S *teeth, he picks his pocket.*

Mar. Auh, ho!

Occ. Spit out; I told you he was gone, sir.

Bran. How cheers Martino?

Mar. O, I can answer you now, master; I feel great ease, sir.

Bran. So do I, Martino.

Mar. I'm rid of a sore burden, for my part, master, Of a scald[1] little one.

Lat. Please but your worship now
To take three drops of the rich water with you,
I'll undertake your man shall cure you, sir,
At twice i' your chamber.

Bran. Shall he so, sir?

Lat. I will uphold him in't.

Mar. Then will I do't, sir.

Lat. How lively your man's now!

Mar. O, I'm so light, methinks,
Over[2] I was!

Bran. What is't contents your worship?

Lat. Even what your worship please; I'm not mercenary.

Bran. My purse is gone, Martino!

---

[1] Scabby.

[2] *i.e.*, beyond what I was.

Lat. How, your purse, sir?
Bran. 'Tis gone, i'faith; I've been among some rascals.
Mar. And that's a thing
I ever gave you warning of, master; you care not
What company you run into.
Bran. Lend me some money; chide me anon, I prithee.
A pox on 'em for vipers! they ha' suck'd blood o' me.
Mar. O master!
Bran. How now, man?
Mar. My purse is gone too!
Bran. How?
I'll ne'er take warning more of thee while I live then;
Thou art an hypocrite, and art not fit
To give good counsel to thy master, that
Canst not keep from ill company thyself.
Lat. This is most strange, sir; both your purses gone!
Mar. Sir, I'd my hand on mine when I came in.
Lat. Are you but sure of that? O, would you were!
Mar. As I'm of ease.
Lat. Then they're both gone one way,
Be that your comfort.
Bran. Ay, but what way's that, sir?
Lat. That close knave in your clothes has got 'em both;
'Tis well you've clapt him fast.
Bran. Why, that's impossible.
Lat. O, tell not me, sir! I ha' known purses gone,

And the thief stand and look one full i' th' face,
As I may do your worship and your man now.
Mar. Nay, that's most certain, master.
Bran. I will make
That rascal in my clothes answer all this then,
And all the robberies that have been done
Since the moon chang'd.—Get you home first, Martino,
And know if any of my wife's things are missing,
Or any more of mine : tell her he's taken,
And by that token he has took both our purses.
Mar. That's an ill token, master.
Bran. That's all one, sir,
She must have that or nothing ; for I'm sure
The rascal has left nothing else for a token.
Begone !
Make haste again, and meet me part o' th' way.
Mar. I'll hang the villain,
And 'twere for nothing but the souse[1] he gave me. [*Exit.*
Bran. Sir, I depart asham'd of my requital,
And leave this seal-ring with you as a pledge
Of further thankfulness. [*Gives ring.*
Lat. No, I beseech you, sir.
Bran. Indeed you shall, sir.
Lat. O, your worship's word, sir.
Bran. You shall have my word too, for a rare gentleman
As e'er I met withal. [*Exit.*
Lat. Clear sight be with you, sir ;
If conduit-water, and my hostess' milk,

[1] Blow.

That comes with the ninth child now, may afford it!
'Life, I fear'd none but thee, my villanous tooth-drawer.
Occ. There was no fear of me; I've often told you
I was bound prentice to a barber once,
But ran away i' the second year.
Lat. Ay, marry,
That made thee give a pull at the wrong tooth,
And me afraid of thee. What have we there, sirs?
Occ. Some threescore dollars i' the master's purse,
And sixteen in the clerk's, a silver seal,
Two or three amber beads, and four blank warrants.
Lat. Warrants! where be they? the best news came yet:
'Mass, here's his hand, and here's his seal; I thank him:
This comes most luckily; one of our fellows
Was took last night, we'll set him first at liberty,
And other good boys after him; and if he
In th' old justice's suit, whom we[1] robb'd lately,
Will come off roundly,[2] we'll set him free too.
Occ. That were a good deed, faith; we may, in pity.
Lat. There's nothing done merely for pity now-a-days,
Money or ware must help too.

Song, in parts, by LATROCINIO *and the rest.*

Give me fortune, give me health,
Give me freedom, I'll get wealth:

---

[1] Old ed. "he."

[2] "Come off roundly" = settle up handsomely. Cf. *Merry Wives*, iv. 3:—"I have turned away my other guests; they must *come off*; I'll sauce them."

Who complains his fate's amiss,
When he has the wide world his?
He that has the devil in fee
Can have but all, and so have we.
Give us fortune, give us health,
Give us freedom, we'll get wealth.
In every hamlet, town, and city,
He has lands that was born witty. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A Room in BRANDINO'S *House.*

Enter PHILIPPA *and* VIOLETTA.

Phil. How well this gentleman keeps his promise too!
Sure there's no trust in man.
Vio. They're all Franciscos,
That's my opinion, mistress; fools or false ones.
He might have had the honesty yet, i'faith,
To send my master's clothes home.
Phil. Ay, those clothes!
Vio. Colliers come by the door every day, mistress—
Nay, this is market-day too, poulterers, butchers;
They would have lain most daintily in a pannier,
And kept veal from the wind.
Phil. Those clothes much trouble me.
Vio. Faith, and he were a gentleman, as he seem'd
To be, they would trouble him too, I think;
Methinks he should have small desire to keep 'em.

Phil. Faith, and less pride to wear 'em, I should think, wench,
Unless he kept 'em as a testimony
For after-times, to show what misery
He past in his young days, and then weep o'er 'em.
Vio. Weep, mistress?
Nay, sure, methinks he should not weep for laughing.

Enter MARTINO.

Phil. Martino? O, we're spoil'd, wench! are they come then?
Mar. Mistress, be of good cheer, I've excellent news for you;
Comfort your heart. What have you to breakfast, mistress?
You shall have all again, I warrant you.
Phil. What says he, wench?
Vio. I'm loath to understand him.
Mar. Give me a note of all your things, sweet mistress;
You shall not lose a hair, take't of my word;
We have him safe enough.
Phil. O, 'las, sweet wench,
This man talks fearfully!
Vio. And I know not what yet;
That's the worst, mistress.
Mar. Can you tell me, pray,
Whether the rascal has broke ope my desk or no?
There's a fine little barrel of pome-citrons

Would have serv'd me this seven year: O, and my fig-cheese!
The fig[1] of everlasting obloquy
Go with him, if he have eat it! I'll make haste;
He cannot eat it all yet. He was taken, mistress,
Grossly and beastly; how do you think, i'faith?
Phil. I know not, sir.
Mar. Troth, in my master's clothes:
Would any thief but a beast been taken so?
Phil. Wench, wench!
Vio. I have grief enough of my mine own to tend, mistress.
Phil. Did he confess the robbery?
Mar. O no, no, mistress;
He's a young cunning rascal, he confess'd nothing;
While we were examining on him, he took away
My master's purse and mine, but confess'd nothing still.
Phil. That's but some slanderous injury rais'd against him.— [*Aside.*
Came not your master with you?
Mar. No, sweet mistress:
I must make haste and meet him; pray, despatch me then.
Phil. I've look'd o'er all with special heedfulness;
There's nothing miss'd, I can assure you, sir,
But that suit of your master's.

---

1 *Make* (or *give*) *the fig* was the thrusting of the thumb between two fingers as a mark of derision. See Dyce's *Shakespeare Glossary*.

Mar. I'm right glad on't:
That suit would hang him, yet I would not have
Him hang'd in that suit though; it will disgrace
My master's fashion for ever, and make it as hateful
As yellow bands.[1] [*Exit.*

Phil. O what shall's do, wench?

Vio. 'Tis no marvel, mistress,
The poor young gentleman could not keep his promise.

Phil. Alas, sweet man, h'as confess'd nothing yet, wench!

Vio. That shows his constancy and love to you, mistress:
But you must do't of force, there is no help for't,
The truth can neither shame nor hurt you much;
Let 'em make what they can on't. 'Twere sin and pity, i'faith,
To cast away so sweet a gentleman
For such a pair of infidel hose and doublet;
I'd not hang a Jew for a whole wardrobe on 'em.

Phil. Thou say'st true, wench.

Enter MARTIA, *disguised as before.*

Vio. O, O, they're come again, mistress!

Phil. Signor Ansaldo?

---

[1] The fashion of wearing yellow bands (*i.e.*, bands dyed with yellow starch) was introduced by the infamous Mrs. Turner, who wore them at the gallows in November 1615. It was supposed that after her execution the fashion would fall into discredit, but this anticipation was not fulfilled. See Reed's long and interesting note on *Albumazar*, ii. 1 (Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, xi. 328–329).

Martia. The same ; mightily cross'd, lady,
But, past hope, freed again by a doctor's means,
A man of art, I know not justly what indeed ;
But pity, and the fortunate gold you gave me,
Wrought my release between 'em.

Phil. Met you not
My husband's man ?

Martia. I took such strange ways, lady,
I hardly met a creature.

Phil. O, most welcome !

Vio. But how shall we bestow him now we have him, mistress ?

Phil. Alas, that's true !

Vio. Martino may come back again.

Phil. Step you into that little chamber speedily, sir,—
And dress him up in one of my gowns and headtires,
His youth will well endure it.

Vio. That will be admirable.

Phil. Nay, do't, do't quickly then, and cut that suit
Into a hundred pieces, that it may never
Be known again.

Vio. A hundred? nay, ten thousand at the least, mistress ; for if there be a piece of that suit left as big as my nail, the deed will come out : 'tis worse than a murder ; I fear 'twill never be hid.

Phil. Away, do your endeavour, and despatch, wench.

[*Exeunt* VIOLETTA *and* MARTIA.

I've thought upon a way of certain safety,
And I may keep him while I have him too,

Without suspicion now; I've heard o' th' like:
A gentleman, that for a lady's love
Was thought six months her woman, tended on her
In her own garments, and she being a widow,
Lay night by night with her in way of comfort;
Marry, in conclusion, match they did together:
Would I'd a copy of the same conclusion!

Enter BRANDINO *with a writing.*

He's come himself now. If thou be'st a happy wench,
Be fortunate in thy speed! I'll delay time
With all the means I can.—O, welcome, sir!

Bran. I'll speak to you anon, wife, and kiss you shortly;
I'm very busy yet: [*reads*] *Cocksey-down, Memberry, Her manor-house at Well-dun.*

Phil. What's that, good sir?

Bran. The widow's, your sweet sister's deed of gift;
Sh'as made all her estate over to me, wench;
She'll be too hard for 'em all: and now come buss me,
Good luck after thieves' handsel.

Phil. O 'tis happy, sir,
You have him fast!

Bran. I ha' laid him safe enough, wench.

Phil. I was so lost in joy at the report on't,
I quite forgot one thing to tell Martino.

Bran. What's that, sweet blood?

Phil. He and his villains, sir,
Robb'd a sweet gentlewoman last night.

Bran. A gentlewoman?
Phil. Nay, most uncivilly and basely stript her, sir.
Bran. O barbarous slaves!
Phil. I was even fain, for womanhood's sake,
Alas, and charity's, to receive her in,
And clothe her poor wants in a suit of mine.
Bran. 'Twas most religiously done; I long for her.
Who have I brought to see thee, think'st thou, woman?
Phil. Nay, sir, I know not.
Bran. Guess, I prithee, heartily;
An enemy of thine.
Phil. That I hope you have not, sir.
Bran. But all was done in jest: he cries thee mercy;
Francisco, sirrah.[1]
Phil. O, I think not on him!
Bran. That letter was but writ to try thy constancy;
He confess'd all to me.
Phil. Joy on him, sir!

Enter FRANCISCO.

So far am I from malice, look you, sir——
Welcome, sweet signor; but I'll ne'er trust you, sir.
Bran. Faith I'm beholding to thee, wife, for this.
Fran. Methinks I enter now this house with joy,
Sweet peace, and quietness of conscience;
I wear no guilty blush upon my cheek
For a sin stampt last midnight: I can talk now
With that kind man, and not abuse him inwardly

[1] See note 1, vol. iv. p. 74.

With any scornful thought made of his shame :
What a sweet being is an honest mind !
It speaks peace to itself and all mankind. [*Aside.*

Re-enter MARTINO.

Bran. Martino !
Mar. Master ?
Bran. There's another robbery done, sirrah,
By the same party.
Mar. What ? your worship mocks,
Under correction.
Phil. I forgot to tell thee ;
He robb'd a lovely gentlewoman.
Mar. O pagan !
This fellow will be ston'd to death with pipkins ;
Your women in the suburbs will so maul him
With broken cruises and pitchers without ears,
He'll never die alive, that's my opini on

Re-enter MARTIA *dressed as a woman, and* VIOLETTA.

Phil. Look you, your judgments, gentlemen ;—yours especially,
Signor Francisco, whose mere [1] object now
Is woman at these years, that's the eye-saint, I know,
Amongst young gallants :—husband, you've a glimpse too;
You offer half an eye, as old you are.

[1] Whole.

Bran. Byrlady, better, wench; an eye and a half, I trow;
I should be sorry else.
Phil. What think you now, sirs,
Is't not a goodly, manly gentlewoman?
Bran. Beshrew my heart else, wife.—
Pray, soft a little, signor; you're but my guest, remember;
I'm master of the house, I'll have the first buss.
Phil. But, husband, 'tis the courtesy of all places
To give a stranger ever the first bit.
Bran. In woodcock or so; but there's no heed to be taken in mutton;[1] we commonly fall so roundly to that, we forget ourselves.—
I'm sorry for thy fortune, but thou'rt welcome, lady.
[*Kisses* MARTIA.
Mar. My master kisses as I've heard a hackney-man
Cheer up his mare,—chap, chap! [*Aside.*
Bran. I have him fast, lady,
And he shall lie by't close.
Martia. You cannot do me
A greater pleasure, sir.
Bran. I'm happily glad on't.
Fran. [*after kissing* MARTIA]. Methinks there's somewhat whispers in my soul,
This is the hour I must begin my acquaintance
With honest love, and banish all loose thoughts;
My fate speaks to me from the modest eye
Of yon sweet gentlewoman. [*Aside.*

[1] See note, p. 27.

Phil. Wench, wench!
Vio. Pish, hold in your breath, mistress;
If you be seen to laugh, you spoil all presently:
I keep it in with all the might I have—puh!
Martia. Pray, what young gentleman's that, sir?
Bran. An honest boy, i'faith,
And came of a good kind; dost like him, lady?
I would thou hadst him, and thou be'st not promis'd;
He's worth ten thousand dollars.
Vio. By this light, mistress,
By master will go near to make a match anon:
Methinks I dream of admirable sport, mistress.
Phil. Peace! thou'rt a drab.
Bran. Come hither now, Francisco:
I've known the time I've had a better stomach;
Now I can dine with looking upon meat.
Fran. That face deserv'd a better fortune, lady,
Than last night's rudeness show'd.
Martia. We cannot be
Our choosers, sir, in our own destiny.
Fran. I return better pleas'd than when I went.
Mar. And could that beastly imp rob you, forsooth?
Martia. Most true, forsooth.
I will not altogether, sir, disgrace you,
Because you look half like a gentleman.
Mar. And that's the mother's half.
Martia. There's my hand for you.
Mar. I swear you could not give me anything
I love better, a hand gets me my living:
O sweet lemon-peel! [*Kisses* MARTIA'S *hand.*

Fran. May I request a modest word or two,
Lady, in private with you?
Martia. With me, sir?
Fran. To make it sure from all suspect of injury
Or unbeseeming privacy, which heaven knows
Is not my aim now, I'll entreat this gentleman
For an ear-witness unto all our conference.
Martia. Why, so, I am content, sir.
Bran. So am I, lady.

[*Exeunt* MARTIA *and* FRANCISCO.

Mar. O master, here is a rare bedfellow
For my mistress to-night! for you know we must
Both out of town again.
Bran. That's true, Martino.
Mar. I do but think how they'll lie telling of tales together,
The prettiest!
Bran. The prettiest[1] indeed.
Mar. Their tongues will never lin[2] wagging, master.
Bran. Never,
Martino, never.

[*Exeunt* BRANDINO *and* MARTINO *severally.*

Phil. Take heed you be not heard.
Vio. I fear you most, mistress.
Phil. Me, fool? ha, ha!
Vio. Why, look you, mistress, faith, you're faulty; ha, ha!

---

[1] Old ed. "pretiliest."
[2] Cease.

Phil. Well said, i'faith; where lies the fault now, gossip?

Vio. O for a husband! I shall burst with laughing else;
This house is able to spoil any maid.

Phil. I'll be reveng'd now soundly of Francisco,
For failing me when time was.

Vio. Are you there, mistress? I thought you would not forget that, however: a good turn disappointed is ever the last thing that a woman forgives, she'll scarce do't when she's speechless; nay, though she hold up her whole hand for all other injuries, she'll forgive that but with one finger.

Phil. I'll vex his heart as much as he mock'd mine.

Vio. But that may mar your hopes too, if our gentlewoman
Be known to be a man.

Phil. Not as I'll work it;
I would not lose this sweet revenge, methinks,
For a whole fortnight of the old man's absence,
Which is the sweetest benefit next to this.—

Re-enter MARTIA.

Why, how now, sir? what course take you for laughing?
We are undone for one.

Martia. Faith, with great pain
Stifle it, and keep it in; I ha' no receipt for't.
But, pray, in sadness,[1] say, what is the gentleman?

[1] Seriousness.

I never knew his like for tedious urgings,
He will receive no answer.
Phil. Would he would not, sir!
Martia. Says I'm ordain'd for him, merely for him,
And that his wiving fate speaks in me to him;
Will force on me a jointure speedily
Of some seven thousand dollars.
Phil. Would thou hadst 'em, sir!
I know he can and he will.
Martia. For wonder's pity,
What is this gentleman?
Phil. Faith, shall I tell you, sir?
One that would make an excellent, honest husband,
For her that's a just maid at one and twenty;
For, on my conscience, he has his maidenhead yet.
Martia. Fie, out upon him, beast!
Phil. Sir, if you love me,
Give way but to one thing I shall request of you.
Martia. Your courtesies, you know, may lay commands on me.
Phil. Then, at his next solicitings, let a consent
Seem to come from you; 'twill make noble sport, sir,
We'll get jointure and all; but you must bear
Yourself most affable to all his purposes.
Martia. I can do that.
Phil. Ay, and take heed of laughing.
Martia. I've bide the worst of that already, lady.
Phil. Peace, set your countenance then, for here he comes.

Re-enter FRANCISCO.

Fran. There is no middle continent in this passion;
I feel it, since it must be love or death,
It was ordain'd for one. [*Aside.*
Phil. Signor Francisco,
I'm sorry 'twas your fortune in my house, sir,
To have so violent a stroke come to you;
The gentlewoman's a stranger; pray, be counsell'd, sir,
Till you hear further of her friends and portion.
Fran. 'Tis only but her love that I desire;
She comes most rich in that.
Phil. But be advis'd though;
I think she's a rich heir, but see the proof, sir,
Before you make her such a generous jointure.
Fran. 'Tis mine, and I will do't.
Phil. She shall be yours too,
If I may rule her then.
Fran. You speak all sweetness,
Phil. She likes your person well; I tell you so much,
But take no note I said so.
Fran. Not a word.
Phil. Come, lady, come, the gentleman's desertful,
And, o' my conscience, honest.
Martia. Blame me not;
I am a maid, and fearful.
Fran. Never truth
Came perfecter from man.

Phil. Give her a lip-taste,
That she herself may praise it.

[FRANCISCO *kisses* MARTIA, *and then exit with her,* PHILIPPA, *and* VIOLETTA.

Re-enter BRANDINO.

Bran. Yea, a match, i'faith!
My house is lucky for 'em.—

Re-enter MARTINO.

Now, Martino?

Mar. Master, the widow has the day.

Bran. The day?

Mar. Sh'as overthrown my youngster.

Bran. Precious tidings!
Clap down four woodcocks more.

Mar. They're all at hand, sir.

Bran. What, both her adversaries too?

Mar. They're come, sir.

Bran. Go, bid the cook serve in two geese in a dish.

Mar. I like your conceit, master, beyond utterance.

[*Exit.*

Enter VALERIA, RICARDO, *and* Two Suitors.

Bran. Welcome, sweet sister! which is the man must have you?
I'd welcome nobody else.

First Suit. Come to me then, sir.

Bran. Are you he, faith, my chain of gold?[1] I'm glad on't.

Val. I wonder you can have the face to follow me,
That have so prosecuted things against me.
But I ha' resolv'd[2] myself 'tis done to spite me.

Ric. O dearth of truth!

Sec. Suit. Nay, do not spoil thy hair;
Hold, hold, I say; I'll get thee a widow somewhere.

Ric. If hand and faith be nothing for a contract,
What shall man hope?

Sec. Suit. 'Twas wont to be enough, honey,
When there was honest meaning amongst widows;
But since your bribes came in, 'tis not allow'd
A contract without gifts to bind it fast;
Everything now must have a feeling first.—
Do I come near you, widow?

Val. No, indeed, sir,
Nor ever shall, I hope:—and for your comfort, sir,
That sought all means t' entrap me for my wealth,
Had law unfortunately put you upon me,
You'd lost your labour, all your aim and hopes, sir;
Here stands the honest gentleman, my brother,
To whom I've made a deed of gift of all.

Bran. Ay, that she has, i'faith; I thank her, gentlemen;
Look you here, sirs. [*Shows writing.*

Val. I must not look for pleasures,

[1] See p. 192. [2] Convinced.

That give more grief if they prove false, or fail us,
Than ever they gave joy.

First Suit. Ha' you serv['d] me so, widow?

Sec. Suit. I'm glad thou hast her not.—Laugh at him, honey; ha, ha!

Val. I must take one that loves me for myself:
Here's an old gentleman looks not after wealth,
But virtue, manners, and conditions.[1]

First Suit. Yes, by my faith, I must have lordships too, widow.

Val. How, sir?

First Suit. Your manners, virtue, and conditions, widow,
Are pretty things within doors, I like well on 'em;
But I must have somewhat without, lying or being
In the tenure or occupation of master[2] such a one, ha?
Those are fine things indeed.

Val. Why, sir, you swore to me it was for love.

First Suit. True; but there's two words to a bargain ever,
All the world over; and if love be one,
I'm sure money's the other; 'tis no bargain else:
Pardon me, I must dine as well as sup, widow.

Val. Cry mercy, I mistook you all this while, sir;
It was this ancient gentleman indeed,
Whom I crave pardon on.

Sec. Suit. What of me, widow!

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[1] Disposition.

[2] "Old ed. 'me' (a misprint for M.)."—*Dyce.*

Val. Alas, I've wrong'd you, sir! 'twas you that swore
You lov'd me for myself.
Sec. Suit. By my troth, but I did not;
Come, father not your lies upon me, widow:
I love you for yourself?—Spit at me, gentlemen,
If ever I'd such a thought.—Fetch me in, widow!
You'll find your reach too short.
Val. Why, you've enough, you say.
Sec. Suit. Ay, but I'll have
My humour too; you never think of that;
They're coach-horses, they go together still.
Val. Whom should a widow trust? I'll swear 'twas one of you
That made me believe so.—Mass, think 'twas you, sir,
Now I remember me.
Ric. I swore too much,
To be believ'd so little.
Val. Was it you then?
Beshrew my heart for wronging of you!—
Ric. Welcome blessing!
Are you mine faithfully now?
Val. As love can make one.
First Suit. Why, this fills the commonwealth so full of beggars,
Marrying for love, which none of mine shall do.
Val. But, now I think on't, we must part again, sir.
Ric. Again?
Val. You're in debt, and I, in doubt of all,
Left myself nothing too; we must not hold,

Want on both sides makes all affection cold :
I shall not keep you from that gentleman,
You'll be his more than mine ; and when he list,
He'll make you lie from me in some sour prison ;
Then let him take you now for altogether, sir,
For he that's mine shall be all mine, or nothing.
Ric. I never felt the evil of my debts
Till this afflicting minute.
Sec. Suit. I'll be mad
Once in my days : I have enough to cure me,
And I will have my humour ; they are now
But desperate debts again, I ne'er look for 'em :
And ever since I knew what malice was,
I always held it sweeter to sow mischief
Than to receive money ; 'tis the finer pleasure.
I'll give him in his bonds, as 'twere in pity,
To make the match, and bring 'em both to beggary :
Then will they ne'er agree, that's a sure point ;
He'll give her a black eye within these three days,
Beat half her teeth out by All-hallowtide,
And break the little household stuff they have
With throwing at one another : O sweet sport !—
[*Aside.*
Come, widow, come, I'll try your honesty :
Here to my honey you've made many proffers,
I fear they're all but tricks.—Here are his debts, gentlemen ; [*Shows bonds.*
How I came by 'em I know best myself.—
Take him before us faithfully for your husband,
And he shall tear 'em all before your face, widow.

Val. Else may all faith refuse me!
Sec. Suit. Tear 'em, honey;
'Tis firm in law, a consideration given:
[RICARDO *tears the bonds.*
What, with thy teeth? thou'lt shortly tear her so,
That's all my hope, thou'dst never had 'em else:
I have enough, and I will have my humour.
Ric. I'm now at liberty, widow.
Val. I'll be so too,
And then I come to thee.—Give me this from you, brother. [*Takes writing.*
Bran. Hold, sister, sister!
Val. Look you, the deed of gift, sir; I'm as free:
He that has me has all, and thou art he.
Both Suit. How's that?
Val. You're bobb'd;[1] 'twas but a deed in trust,—
And all to prove thee, whom I've found most just.
Bran. I'm bobb'd among the rest too; I'd have sworn
'T had been a thing for me and my heirs for ever;
If I'd but got it up to the black box above,
I[t] had been past redemption.
First Suit. How am I cheated!
Sec. Suit. I hope you'll have the conscience now to pay me, sir.
Ric. O wicked man, sower of strife and envy,
Open not thy lips!
Sec. Suit. How, how's this?

[1] Cheated.

Ric. Thou hast no charge at all, no child of thine own,
But two thou gott'st once of a scouring-woman,
And they're both well provided for, they're i' th' Hospital:[1]
Thou hast ten thousand pound to bury thee;
Hang thyself when thou wilt, a slave go with thee!
Sec. Suit. I'm gone, my goodness comes all out together:
I have enough, but I have not my humour. [*Exit.*

Re-enter VIOLETTA.

Vio. O master, gentlemen, and you, sweet widow,—
I think you are no forwarder, yet I know not,—
If ever you be sure to laugh again,
Now is the time!
Val. Why, what's the matter, wench?
Vio. Ha, ha, ha!
Bran. Speak, speak.
Vio. Ha!—a marriage,
A marriage; I cannot tell't for laughing—ha, ha!
Bran. A marriage? do you make that a laughing matter?
Vio. Ha!—ay, and you'll make it so when you know all.
Here they come,
Here they come, one man married to another!

[1] See note 2, p. 156.

[2] Gifford notices that there is a similar incident in *The New Inn*, v. 1.

Val. How? man to man?
Vio. Ay, man to man, i'faith;
There'll be good sport at night to bring 'em both to bed:

Re-enter MARTIA, PHILIPPA, *and* FRANCISCO.

Do you see 'em now? ha, ha, ha!
First Suit. My daughter Martia!
Martia. O my father! your love and pardon, sir!
Val. 'Tis she indeed, gentlemen.
Martia. I have been disobedient, I confess,
Unto your mind, and heaven has punish'd me
With much affliction since I fled your sight;
But finding reconcilement from above
In peace of heart, the next I hope's your love.
First Suit. I cannot but forgive thee now I see thee;
Thou fledd'st a happy fortune of an old man,
But Francisco's of a noble family,
Though he be somewhat spent.
Fran. I lov'd her not, sir,
As she was yours, for I protest I knew't not,
But for herself, sir, and her own deservings,
Which, had you been as foul as you've been spiteful,
I should have lov'd in her.
First Suit. Well, hold your prating, sir;
You are not like to lose by't.
Phil. O Violetta, who shall laugh at us now?
Vio. The child unborn, mistress.
Martia. Be good.
Fran. Be honest.

Martia. Heaven will not let you sin, and you'd be careful.

Fran. What means it sends to help you, think, and mend,
You're as much bound as we to praise that friend.

Phil. I am so, and I will so.

Martia. Marry you speedily;
Children tame you, you'll die like a wild beast else.

Vio. Ay, by my troth, should I. I've much ado
To forbear laughing now, more's my hard fortune.

Re-enter MARTINO.

Mar. O master, mistress, and you gentles all,
To horse, to horse presently, if you mean to do
Your country any service!

Bran. Art not asham'd, Martino, to talk of horsing
So openly before young married couples thus?

Mar. It does concern the commonwealth, and me,
And you, master, and all: the thieves are taken.

Martia. What say'st, Martino?

Mar. La,[1] here's commonwealth's-men!
The man of art, master, that cupp'd your eyes,
Is prov'd an arrant rascal; and his man,
That drew my tooth, an excellent purse-drawer—
I felt no pain in that, it went insensibly.
Such notable villanies confess'd!——

Bran. Stop there, sir:

[1] Old ed. "Law."

We will have time for them.—Come, gentlefolks,
Take a slight meal with us: but the best cheer
Is perfect joy, and that we wish all here.[1]
Ric. Stay, stay, sir; I'm as hungry of my widow,
As you can be upon your maid, believe it;
But we must come to our desires in order;
There's duties to be paid ere we go further.—
He that without your likings leaves this place,
Is like one falls to meat and forgets grace;
And that's not handsome, trust me, no:
Our rights being paid, and your loves understood,
My widow and my meat then does me good.—
I ha' no money, wench, I told thee true,—
For my report, pray let her hear't from you.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

[1] Here old ed. gives the stage-direction "*Exeunt*," and Ricardo's speech (printed on another page) is headed "*Epilogue*."

ANYTHING FOR A QUIET LIFE.

Any Thing For A Quiet Life. A Comedy, Formerly Acted at Black-Fryers, by His late Majesties Servants. Never before Printed. Written by Tho. Middleton, Gent. London: Printed by Tho. Johnson for Francis Kirkman, and Henry Marsh, and are to be sold at the Princes Arms in Chancery-Lane. 1662. 4to.

The play is printed for the most part as prose in the old edition.

PROLOGUE.

Howe'er th' intents and appetites of men
Are different as their faces, how and when
T' employ their actions, yet all without strife
Meet in this point,—Anything for a quiet life:
Nor is there one, I think, that's hither come
For his delight, but would find peace at home
On any terms. The lawyer does not cease
To talk himself into a sweat with pain,
And so his fees buy quiet, 'tis his gain:
The poor man does endure the scorching sun
And feels no weariness, his day-labour done,
So his wife entertain him with a smile
And thank his travail, though she slept the while.
This being in men of all conditions true
Does give our play a name; and if to you
It yield content and usual delight,
For our parts we shall sleep secure to-night.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD BEAUFORT.
SIR FRANCIS CRESSINGHAM.
GEORGE CRESSINGHAM, } *his sons.*
EDWARD, *a child,* }
FRANKLIN *senior.*
FRANKLIN *junior, his son.*
KNAVESBY, *a lawyer.*
SAUNDER, *steward to Sir Francis Cressingham.*
WATER-CAMLET, *a mercer.*
GEORGE, } *his apprentices.*
RALPH, }
SWEET-BALL, *a barber.*
FLESH-HOOK.
COUNTERBUFF.
Surveyor, Barber's Boy, &c.

LADY CRESSINGHAM, *wife to Sir Francis.*
MISTRESS GEORGE CRESSINGHAM, *disguised as Selenger, a page to Lord Beaufort.*
MISTRESS KNAVESBY.
MISTRESS WATER-CAMLET.
MARIA, *a child, daughter to Sir Francis Cressingham.*
MARGARITA, *a French Bawd.*

Scene, LONDON.

ANYTHING FOR A QUIET LIFE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Room in Sir FRANCIS CRESSINGHAM'S *House.*

Enter LORD BEAUFORT *and* Sir FRANCIS CRESSINGHAM.

L. Beau. Away, I am asham'd of your proceedings!
And, seriously, you have in this one act
O'erthrown the reputation the world
Held of your wisdom.
Sir F. Cres. Why, sir?
L. Beau. Can you not see your error?
That having buried so good a wife
Not a month since,—one that, to speak the truth,
Had all those excellencies which our books
Have only feign'd to make a complete wife
Most exactly in her in practice,—and to marry
A girl of fifteen, one bred up i' the court,
That by all consonancy of reason is like
To cross your estate: why, one new gown of hers,

When 'tis paid for, will eat you out the keeping
Of a bountiful Christmas. I'm asham'd of you;
For you shall make too dear a proof of it,
I fear, that in the election of a wife,
As in a project of war, to err but once
Is to be undone for ever.
Sir F. Cres. Good my lord,
I do beseech you, let your better judgment
Go along with your reprehension!
L. Beau. So it does,
And can find nought t' extenuate your fault
But your dotage: you're a man well sunk in years,
And to graft such a young blossom into your stock
Is the next way to make every carnal eye
Bespeak your injury. Troth, I pity her too;
She was not made to wither and go out
By painted fires, that yields her no more heat
Than to be lodg'd in some bleak banqueting-house
I' the dead of winter; and what follows then?
Your shame and the ruin of your children; and there's
The end of a rash bargain.
Sir F. Cres. With your pardon,
That she is young is true; but that discretion
Has gone beyond her years, and overta'en
Those of maturer age, does more improve[1]
Her goodness. I confess she was bred at court,
But so retiredly, that, as still the best
In some place is to be learnt there, so her life

[1] Prove.

Did rectify itself more by the court-chapel
Than by th' office of the revels: best of all virtues
Are to be found at court; and where you meet
With writings contrary to this known truth,
They're fram'd by men that never were so happy
To be planted there to know it. For the difference
Between her youth and mine, if you will read
A matron's sober staidness in her eye,
And all the other grave demeanour fitting
The governess of a house, you'll then confess
There's no disparity between us.

L. Beau. Come, come, you read

Enter WATER-CAMLET.

What you'd have her to be, not what she is.—
O, master Water-Camlet, you are welcome.

W.-Cam. I thank your lordship.

L. Beau. And what news stirring in Cheapside?

W.-Cam. Nothing new there, my lord, but the Standard.[1]

L. Beau. O, that's a monument your wives take great delight in: I do hear you are grown a mighty purchaser; I hope shortly to find you a continual resident upon the north aisle of the Exchange.

W.-Cam. Where? with the Scotchmen?

L. Beau. No, sir, with the aldermen.

W.-Cam. Believe it, I am a poor commoner.

[1] See note 2, vol. i. p. 240.

Sir F. Cres. Come, you are warm,[1] and blest with a fair wife.

W.-Cam. There's it; her going brave[2] has the only virtue to improve my credit in the subsidy-book.

L. Beau. But, I pray, how thrives your new plantation of silk-worms? those I saw last summer at your garden.

W.-Cam. They are removed, sir.

L. Beau. Whither?

W.-Cam. This winter my wife has removed them home to a fair chamber, where divers courtiers use to come and see them, and my wife carries them up: I think shortly, what with the store of visitants, they'll prove as chargeable to me as the morrow after Simon and Jude,[3] only excepting the taking down and setting up again of my glass windows.

L. Beau. That a man of your estate should be so gripple-minded and repining at his wife's bounty!

Sir F. Cres. There are no such ridiculous things i' the world as those love money better than themselves; for though they have understanding to know riches, and a mind to seek them, and a wit to find them, and policy to keep them, and long life to possess them; yet, commonly, they have withal such a false sight, such bleared eyes, all their wealth, when it lies before them, does seem poverty; and such a one are you.

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[1] Well-to-do.

[2] Finely dressed.

[3] "The morrow after Simon and Jude," *i.e.*, 29th October, Lord Mayor's Day (before the adoption, in 1752, of the new style of reckoning).

W.-Cam. Good Sir Francis, you have had sore eyes too, you have been a gamester, but you have given it o'er; and to redeem the vice belonged to't, now you entertain certain farcels[1] of silenced ministers, which, I think, will equally undo you; yet should these waste you but lenitively, your devising new water-mill[s] for recovery of drowned land,[2] and certain dreams you have in alchemy to find the philosopher's stone, will certainly draw you to the bottom. I speak freely, sir, and would not have you angry, for I love you.

Sir F. Cres. I am deeply in your books for furnishing my late wedding; have you brought a note of the particulars?

W.-Cam. No, sir; at more leisure.

Sir F. Cres. What comes the sum to?

W.-Cam. For tissue, cloth-of-gold, velvets, and silks, about fifteen hundred pounds.

Sir F. Cres. Your money is ready.

W.-Cam. Sir, I thank you.

Sir F. Cres. And how does my two young children, whom I have put to board with you?

L. Beau. Have you put forth two of your children already?

Sir F. Cres. 'Twas my wife's discretion to have it so.

---

[1] "Is, perhaps, a word formed from the verb *farce* (to stuff), though I have not elsewhere met with it."—*Dyce.*

[2] In the *Devil is an Ass*, ii. 1, Ben Jonson derides this project. Cf. Randolph's *Muses' Looking-Glass*, iii. 1:—

> "I have a rare device to set Dutch windmills
> Upon Newmarket Heath and Salisbury Plain
> To drain the fens."

L. Beau. Come, 'tis the first principle in a mother-in-law's chop-logic to divide the family, to remove from forth your sight the object[s] that her cunning knows would dull her insinuation. Had you been a kind father, it would have been your practice every day to have preached to these two young ones carefully your late wife's funeral-sermon. 'Las, poor souls, are they turn'd so soon a-grazing?

W.-Cam. My lord, they are placed where they shall be respected as mine own.

Enter GEORGE CRESSINGHAM *and* FRANKLIN *junior.*

L. Beau. I make no question of't, good master Camlet.—
See here your eldest son, George[1] Cressingham.

Sir F. Cres. You have displeas'd and griev'd your mother-in-law;
And till you've made submission and procur'd
Her pardon, I'll not know you for my son.

G. Cres. I've wrought her no offence, sir; the difference
Grew about certain jewels which my mother,
By your consent, lying upon her deathbed,
Bequeath'd to her three children: these I demanded,
And being denied these, thought this sin of hers,
To violate so gentle a request
Of her predecessor, was an ill foregoing
Of a mother-in-law's[2] harsh nature.

[1] Old ed. "Franck."

[2] Old authors frequently use the form *mother-in-law* for *stepmother*.

Sir F. Cres. Sir, understand
My will mov'd in her denial: you have jewels,
To pawn or sell them! sirrah, I will have you
As obedient to this woman as to myself;
Till then you're none of mine.
W.-Cam. O master George,
Be rul'd, do anything for a quiet life!
Your father's peace of life move in it too.
I have a wife; when she is in the sullens,
Like a cook's dog that you see turn a wheel,
She will be sure to go and hide herself
Out of the way dinner and supper; and in
These fits Bow-bell is a still organ to her.
When we were married first, I well remember,
Her railing did appear but a vision,
Till certain scratches on my hand[s] and face
Assur'd me 'twas substantial. She's a creature
Uses to waylay my faults, and more desires
To find them out than to have them amended:
She has a book, which I may truly nominate
Her Black Book, for she remembers in it,
In short items, all my misdemeanours;
as, item, such a day I was got foxed[1] with foolish metheglin, in the company of certain Welsh chapmen: item, such a day, being at the Artillery Garden,[2] one of

[1] Drunk.

[2] "'A field enclosed with a bricke wall, without Bishopsgate.'—Stow's *Annales*, p. 1084, ed. 1631: see, too, his account of 'The practise in the Artillery Garden reuiued [in 1610],' *ibid.*, p. 995. At a later period, 'the practice' was generally held in Moorfields: vide Stow's *Survey*, b. iii. p. 70, ed. 1720."—*Dyce.*

my neighbours, in courtesy to salute me with his musket, set a-fire my fustian and ape's breeches:[1] such a day I lost fifty pound in hugger-mugger at dice, at the Quest-house:[2] item, I lent money to a sea-captain on his bare *Confound him he would pay me again the next morning:* and such like:

For which she rail'd upon me when I should sleep,
And that's, you know, intolerable, for indeed
'Twill tame an elephant.

G. Cres. 'Tis a shrewd vexation;
But your discretion, sir, does bear it out
With a month's sufferance.

W.-Cam. Yes, and I would wish you
To follow mine example.

Frank. jun. Here's small comfort,
George, from your father; here's a lord whom I
Have long depended upon for employment; I'll see
If my suit will thrive better.—Please your lordship,
You know I'm a younger brother, and my fate
Throwing me upon the late ill-starr'd voyage
To Guiana,[3] failing of our golden hopes,

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[1] Unless the meaning is that the seat of the breeches was threadbare, I cannot understand the mention of the ape. Dyce suggests that we should read "Naples breeches," and he adds—"In *The Rates of Marchandize* (reign of James I.) various sorts of 'Naples Fustians' are mentioned."

[2] The parish watch-house.

[3] "*i.e.*, I presume, the first voyage, under Raleigh, in 1595: there were three voyages to Guiana; see Southey's excellent *Lives of Brit. Admirals*, vol. iv. pp. 257, 317, 324."—*Dyce.* I suspect that there is a reference to something more recent,—to the voyage of 1617.

I and my ship address'd ourselves to serve
The duke of Florence.
L. Beau. Yes, I understood so.
Frank. jun. Who gave me both encouragement and means
To do him some small service 'gainst the Turk:
Being settled there, both in his pay and trust,
Your lordship, minding to rig forth a ship
To trade for the East Indies, sent for me;
And what your promise was, if I would leave
So great a fortune to become your servant,
Your letters yet can witness.
L. Beau. Yes; what follows?
Frank. jun. That, for aught I perceive, your former purpose
Is quite forgotten. I've stay'd here two months,
And find your intended voyage but a dream,
And the ship you talk of as imaginary
As that th' astronomers point at in the clouds.
I've spent two thousand ducats since my arrival;
Men that have command, my lord, at sea, cannot live
Ashore without money.
L. Beau. Know, sir, a late purchase,
Which cost me a great sum, has diverted me
From my former purpose; besides, suits in law
Do every term so trouble me by land,
I've forgot going by water. If you please
To rank yourself among my followers,
You shall be welcome, and I'll make your means
Better than any gentleman's I keep.

Frank. jun. Some twenty mark a-year! will that maintain
Scarlet and gold lace, play at th' ordinary,[1]
And bevers[2] at the tavern?
L. Beau. I had thought
To prefer you to have been captain of a ship
That's bound for the Red Sea.
Frank. jun. What hinders it?
L. Beau. Why, certainly, the merchants are possess'd[3]
You've been a pirate.
Frank. jun. Say I were one still.
If I were past the Line once, why, methinks,
I should do them better service.

Enter KNAVESBY.

L. Beau. Pray, forbear;
Here is a gentleman whose business must
Engross me wholly.
G. Cres. What's he? dost thou know him?
Frank. jun. A pox upon him! a very knave and rascal,
That goes a-hunting with the penal statutes,
And good for nought but to persuade their lords
To rack their rents and give o'er housekeeping:
Such caterpillars may hang at their lords' ears
When better men are neglected.

---

[1] See note, vol. i. p. 236.
[2] Refreshments between meals. The word is not quite obsolete.
[3] Informed.

G. Cres. What's his name?
Frank. jun. Knavesby.
G. Cres. Knavesby!
Frank. jun. One that deals in a tenth share
About projections: he and his partners, when
They've got a suit once past the seal, will so
Wrangle about partition, and sometimes
They fall to th' ears about it; like your fencers,
That cudgel one another by patent: you shall see him
So terribly bedash'd in a Michaelmas term,
Coming from Westminster, that you would swear
He were lighted from a horse-race. Hang him, hang him!
He's a scurvy informer; has more cozenage
In him than is in five travelling lotteries.
To feed a kite with the carrion of this knave
When he's dead, and reclaim[1] her, O she would prove
An excellent hawk for talon! has a fair creature
To his wife too, and a witty rogue it is;
And some men think this knave will wink at small faults.
But, honest George, what shall become of us now?
G. Cres. Faith, I'm resolvèd to set up my rest[2]
For the Low Countries.
Frank. jun. To serve there?

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[1] Tame. A term in falconry.
[2] "Set up my rest for" = stake my fortunes on. An expression borrowed from the game of primero.

G. Cres. Yes, certain.

Frank. jun. There's thin commons;
Besides, they've added one day more to the week
Than was in the creation: art thou valiant,
Art thou valiant, George?

G. Cres. I may be, and I be put to't.

Frank. jun. O, never fear that;
Thou canst not live two hours after thy landing
Without a quarrel: thou must resolve to fight,
Or, like a sumner,[1] thou'lt be bastinado'd
At every town's end. You shall have gallants there
As ragged as the fall o' the leaf, that live
In Holland, where the finest linen's made,
And yet wear ne'er a shirt: these will not only
Quarrel with a new-comer when they're drunk,
But they will quarrel with any man has means
To be drunk afore them. Follow my council, George,
Thou shalt not go o'er; we'll live here i' the city.

G. Cres. But how?

Frank. jun. How! why, as other gallants do,
That feed high and play copiously, yet brag
They've but nine pound a-year to live on: these
Have wit to turn rich fools and gulls into quarter-days,
That bring them in certain payment. I've a project
Reflects upon yon mercer, master Camlet,
Shall put us into money.

G. Cres. What is't?

Frank. jun. Nay,

[1] "*Summoner* signifieth one used to call or cite a man to any court."—Cowell's *Interpreter.*

I will not stale 't[1] aforehand, 'tis a new one:
Nor cheating amongst gallants may seem strange;
Why, a reaching wit goes current on th' Exchange.

[*Exeunt* G. CRESSINGHAM *and* FRANKLIN *junior.*

Kna. O, my lord, I remember you and I were students together at Cambridge; but, believe me, you went far beyond me.

L. Beau. When I studied there, I had so fantastical a brain, that like a felfare[2] frighted in winter by a birding-piece, I could settle nowhere; here and there a little of every several art, and away.

Kna. Now, my wit, though it were more dull, yet I went slowly on; and as divers others, when I could not prove an excellent scholar, by a plodding patience I attained to be a petty lawyer; and I thank my dulness for't: you may stamp in lead any figure, but in oil or quicksilver nothing can be imprinted, for they keep no certain station.

L. Beau. O, you tax me well of irresolution: but say, worthy friend, how thrives my weighty suit which I have trusted to your friendly bosom? is there any hope to make me happy?

Kna. 'Tis yet questionable, for I have not broke the ice to her: an hour hence come to my house; and if it lie in man, be sure, as the law-phrase says, I will create you lord-paramount of your wishes.

L. Beau. O my best friend! and one that takes the

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[1] Make it flat, deprive it of freshness.
[2] Fieldfare.

hardest course i' the world to make himself so. [*Exit* KNAVESBY.]—Sir, now I'll take my leave.

Sir F. Cres. Nay, good my lord, my wife is coming down.

L. Beau. Pray, pardon me; I have business so importunes me o' the sudden, I cannot stay: deliver mine excuse; and in your ear this,—let not a fair woman make you forget your children. [*Exit.*

Enter LADY CRESSINGHAM *and* SAUNDER.

L. Cres. What, are you taking leave too?

W.-Cam. Yes, good madam.

L. Cres. The rich stuff[s] which my husband bought of you, the works of them are too common; I have got a Dutch painter to draw patterns, which I'll have sent to your factors, as in Italy, at Florence, and Ragusa, where these stuffs are woven, to have pieces made for mine own wearing, of a new invention.

W.-Cam. You may, lady; but 'twill be somewhat chargeable.

L. Cres. Chargeable! what of that? if I live another year, I'll have my agents shall lie for me at Paris, and at Venice, and at Valladolid in Spain, for intelligence of all new fashions.

Sir F. Cres. Do, sweetest; thou deservest to be exquisite in all things.

W.-Cam. The two children, to which you are mother-in-law, would be repaired too; 'tis time they had new clothing.

L. Cres. I pray, sir, do not trouble me with them; they have a father indulgent and careful of them.

Sir F. Cres. I am sorry you made the motion to her.

W.-Cam. I have done.—
He has run himself into a pretty dotage!— [*Aside.*
Madam, with your leave.—
He's tied to a new law and a new wife;
Yet, to my old proverb, Anything for a quiet life.
[*Aside, and exit.*

L. Cres. Good friend, I have a suit to you.

Sir F. Cres. Dearest self, you most powerfully sway me.

L. Cres. That you would give o'er this fruitless, if I may not say this idle, study of alchemy; why, half your house looks like a glass-house.

Saun. And the smoke you make is a worse enemy to good housekeeping than tobacco.

L. Cres. Should one of your glasses break, it might bring you to a dead palsy.

Saun. My lord, your quicksilver has made all your more solid gold and silver fly in fume.

Sir F. Cres. I'll be ruled by you in anything.

L. Cres. Go, Saunder, break all the glasses.

Saun. I fly to't. [*Exit.*

L. Cres. Why, noble friend, would you find the true philosopher's stone indeed, my good housewifery should do it: you understand I was bred up with a great courtly lady; do not think all women mind gay clothes and riot; there are some widows living who have improved both their own fortunes and their children's:

would you take my counsel, I'd advise you to sell your land.

Sir F. Cres. My land!

L. Cres. Yes; and the manor-house upon't, 'tis rotten: O the new-fashioned buildings brought from the Hague! 'tis stately. I have intelligence of a purchase, and the title sound, will for half the money you may sell yours for, bring you in more rent than yours now yields you.

Sir F. Cres. If it be so good a pennyworth, I need not sell my land to purchase it; I'll procure money to do it.

L. Cres. Where, sir?

Sir F. Cres. Why, I'll take it up at interest.

L. Cres. Never did any man thrive that purchased with use-money.

Sir F. Cres. How come you to know these thrifty principles?

L. Cres. How? why, my father was a lawyer, and died in the commission; and may not I, by a natural instinct, have a reaching that way? there are, on mine own knowledge, some divines' daughters infinitely affected with reading controversies; and that, some think, has been a means to bring so many suits into the spiritual court. Pray, be advised; sell your land, and purchase more: I knew a pedlar, by being merchant this way, is become lord of many manors: we should look to lengthen our estates, as we do our lives;

Re-enter SAUNDER.

And though I'm young, yet I am confident
Your able constitution of body,
When you are past fourscore, shall keep you fresh
Till I arrive at the neglected year
That I'm past child-bearing; and yet even [1] there
Quickening our faint heats in a soft embrace,
And kindling divine flames in fervent prayers,
We may both go out together, and one tomb
Quit our executors the rites of two.
Sir. F. Cres. O, you're so wise and so good in everything,
I move by your direction.
Saun. She has caught him. [*Aside.*
[*Exeunt.*

[1] Old ed. "ever."

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Room in KNAVESBY'S *House.*

Enter KNAVESBY *and* MISTRESS KNAVESBY.

Kna. Have you drunk the eggs[1] and muscadine I sent you?

Mis. Kna. No, they are too fulsome.

Kna. Away! you're a fool!—
How shall I begin to break the matter to her? [*Aside.*]
I do long, wife.

Mis. Kna. Long, sir?

Kna. Long infinitely:
Sit down; there is a penitential motion in me,
Which if thou wilt but second, I shall be
One of the happiest men in Europe.

Mis. Kna. What might that be?

Kna. I had last night one of the strangest dreams;
Methought I was thy confessor, thou mine,
And we reveal'd between us privately
How often we had wrong'd each other's bed
Since we were married.

[1] "Eggs and muscadine."—See note 1, vol. iii. p. 94.

Mis. Kna. Came you drunk to bed?
There was a dream, with a witness!
Kna. No, no witness;
I dreamt nobody heard it but we two.
This dream, wife, do I long to put in act;
Let us confess each other; and I vow,
Whatever thou hast done with that sweet corpse
In the way of natural frailty, I protest,
Most freely I will pardon.
Mis. Kna. Go sleep again:
Was there e'er such a motion?
Kna. Nay, sweet woman,
And thou'lt not have me run mad with my desire,
Be persuaded to't.
Mis. Kna. Well, be it your pleasure.
Kna. But to answer truly.
Mis. Kna. O, most sincerely.
Kna. Begin then; examine me first.
Mis. Kna. Why, I know not what to ask you.
Kna. Let me see: your father was a captain; demand of me how many dead pays[1] I am to answer for in the muster-book of wedlock, by the martial fault of borrowing from my neighbours.
Mis. Kna. Troth, I can ask no such foolish questions.

[1] "Dead pays" = pay continued to soldiers after their death, which dishonest officers pocketed. This iniquitous practice seems to have been not uncommon. In Day's *Parliament of Bees* Armiger protests that he—

> "Never pursed *dead pay*,
> Never made week the longer by a day;
> A soldier dead, his pay did likewise die."

Kna. Why, then, open confession, I hope, dear wife, will merit freer pardon: I sinned twice with my laundress; and last circuit there was at Banbury a she-chamberlain that had a spice of purity,[1] but at last I prevailed over her.

Mis. Kna. O, you are an ungracious husband!

Kna. I have made a vow never to ride abroad but in thy company: O, a little drink makes me clamber like a monkey! Now, sweet wife, you have been an out-lier too; which is best feed, in the forest or in the purlieus?

Mis. Kna. A foolish mind of you i' this.

Kna. Nay, sweet love, confess freely; I have given you the example.

Mis. Kna. Why, you know I went last year to Stourbridge fair.

Kna. Yes.

Mis. Kna. And being in Cambridge, a handsome scholar, one of Emmanuel College, fell in love with me.

Kna. O you sweet-breathed monkey!

Mis. Kna. Go hang; you are so boisterous.

Kna. But did this scholar show thee his chamber?

Mis. Kna. Yes.

Kna. And didst thou like him?

Mis. Kna. Like him? O, he had the most enticingest straw-coloured beard, a woman with black eyes would

[1] A sneer at the Puritans, who mustered thick at Banbury. Cf. Ben Jonson's *Gipsies Metamorphosed*—

"From the candlesticks of Lothbury,
And the loud *pure wives of Banbury*
. . . . . .
Bless the sovereign and his hearing."

have loved him like jet: he was the finest man, with a formal wit; and he had a fine dog, that sure was whelped i' the college, for he understood Latin.

Kna. Pooh waw! this is nothing, till I know what he did in's chamber.

Mis. Kna. He burnt wormwood in't, to kill the fleas i' the rushes.

Kna. But what did he to thee there?

Mis. Kna. Some five-and-twenty years hence I may chance tell you: fie upon you; what tricks, what crotchets are these? have you placed anybody behind the arras to hear my confession? I heard one in England got a divorce from 's wife by such a trick: were I disposed now, I would make you as mad: you shall see me play the changeling.[1]

Kna. No, no, wife, you shall see me play the changeling: hadst thou confessed, this other suit I'll now prefer to thee would have been despatched in a trice.

Mis. Kna. And what's that, sir?

Kna. Thou wilt wonder at it four-and-twenty years longer than nine days.

Mis. Kna. I would very fain hear it.

Kna. There is a lord o' the court, upon my credit, a most dear, honourable friend of mine, that must lie with thee: do you laugh? 'tis not come to that; you'll laugh when you know who 'tis.

Mis. Kna. Are you stark mad?

Kna. On my religion, I have past my word for't;

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[1] Idiot.

'Tis the Lord Beaufort; thou'rt made happy for ever;
The generous and bountiful Lord Beaufort:
You being both so excellent, 'twere pity
If such rare pieces should not be conferr'd
And sampled together.

Mis. Kna. Do you mean seriously?

Kna. As I hope for preferment.

Mis. Kna. And can you lose me thus?

Kna. Lose you? I shall love you the better: why, what's the viewing any wardrobe or jewel-house, without a companion to confer their likings? yet, now I view thee well, methinks thou art a rare monopoly, and great pity one man should enjoy thee.

Mis. Kna. This is pretty!

Kna. Let's divorce ourselves so long, or think I am gone to th' Indies, or lie with him when I am asleep; for some Familists[1] of Amsterdam will tell you [it] may be done with a safe conscience: come, you wanton, what hurt can this do to you? I protest, nothing so much as to keep company with an old woman has sore eyes; no more wrong than I do my beaver when I try it thus; look, this is all; smooth, and keeps fashion still.

Mis. Kna. You're one of the basest fellows!

Kna. I look'd for chiding;
I do make this a kind of fortitude
The Romans never dreamt of; and 'twere known,
I should be spoke and writ of when I'm rotten,
For 'tis beyond example.

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[1] See prefatory note to *The Family of Love*, vol. iii. pp. 3-5.

Mis. Kna. But, I pray, resolve[1] me;
Suppose this done, could you e'er love me after?

Kna. I protest I never thought so well of thee
Till I knew he took a fancy to thee; like one
That has variety of choice meat before him,
Yet has no stomach to't until he hear
Another praise [it]: hark, my lord is coming!
[*Knocking within.*

Mis. Kna. Possible?

Kna. And my preferment comes along with him: be wise, mind your good; and to confute all reason in the world which thou canst urge against it, when 'tis done, we will be married again, wife, which some say is the only *supersedeas* about Limehouse to remove cuckoldry.

Enter LORD BEAUFORT.

L. Beau. Come, are you ready to attend me to the court?

Kna. Yes, my lord.

L. Beau. Is this fair one your wife?

Kna. At your lordship's service. I will look up some writings, and return presently. [*Exit.*

Mis. Kna. To see and the base fellow do not leave 's alone too! [*Aside.*

L. Beau. 'Tis an excellent habit this: where were you born, sweet?

Mis. Kna. I am a Suffolk woman, my lord.

L. Beau. Believe it, every country you breathe on is

[1] Inform.

the sweeter for you: let me see your hand; the case is loath to part with the jewel [*drawing off her glove*]: fairest one, I have skill in palmistry.

Mis. Kna. Good my lord, what do you find there?

L. Beau. In good earnest, I do find written here, all my good fortune lies in your hand.

Mis. Kna. You'll keep a very bad house then; you may see by the smallness of the table.[1]

L. Beau. Who is your sweetheart?

Mis. Kna. Sweetheart?

L. Beau. Yes; come, I must sift you to know it.

Mis. Kna. I am a sieve too coarse for your lordship's manchet.[2]

L. Beau. Nay, pray you, tell me; for I see your husband is an unhandsome fellow.

Mis Kna. O, my lord, I took him by weight, not fashion; goldsmiths' wives taught me that way of bargain, and some ladies swerve not to follow the example.

L. Beau. But will you not tell me who is your private friend?

Mis. Kna. Yes, and you'll tell me who is yours.

L. Beau. Shall I show you her?

Mis. Kna. Yes; when will you?

L. Beau. Instantly: look you, there you may see her. [*Leading her to a mirror.*

Mis. Kna. I'll break the glass, 'tis now worth nothing.

---

[1] A term in palmistry.—"The whole collection of lines on the skin, within the hand."—*Nares.* (But see Halliwell's Dictionary, *s. v.*)

[2] Fine wheaten bread.

L. Beau. Why?

Mis. Kna. You have made it a flattering one.

L. Beau. I have a summer-house for you, a fine place to flatter solitariness; will you come and lie there?

Mis. Kna. No, my lord.

L. Beau. Your husband has promised me; will you not?

Mis. Kna. I must wink, I tell you, or say nothing.

L. Beau. So, I'll kiss you and wink too [*kisses her*]; midnight is Cupid's holyday. 171

Re-enter KNAVESBY.

Kna. By this time 'tis concluded.—Will you go, my lord?

L. Beau. I leave with you my best wishes till I see you.

Kna. This now, if I may borrow our lawyer's phrase, is my wife's *imparlance*;[1] at her next appearance she must answer your *declaration*.

L. Beau. You follow it well, sir.

[*Exeunt* LORD BEAUFORT *and* KNAVESBY.

Mis. Kna. Did I not know my husband of so base,
Contemptible [a] nature, I should think 181
'Twere but a trick to try me; but it seems
They're both in wicked earnest; and methinks

[1] "*Imparlance* is a petition made in Court upon the Count of the Demandant by the Tenent, or Declaration of the Plaintiffe, by the Defendant, whereby he craveth respite, or any other day to put in his answer."—Cowell's *Interpreter*.

Upon the sudden, I've a great mind to loathe
This scurvy, unhandsome way my lord has ta'en
To compass me; why, 'tis for all the world
As if he should come to steal some apricocks
My husband kept for's own tooth, and climb up
Upon his head and shoulders: I'll go to him;
He'll put me into brave [1] clothes and rich jewels;
'Twere a very ill part in me not to go,
His mercer and his goldsmith else might curse me;
And what I'll do there, a' my troth, yet I know not.
Women, though puzzled with these subtle deeds,
May, as i' the spring, pick physic out of weeds. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

WATER-CAMLET'S *Shop.*

WATER-CAMLET, GEORGE, *and* RALPH *discovered.*

Geo. What is't you lack, you lack, you lack?
Stuffs for the belly or the back?
Silk-grograns, satins, velvet fine,
The rosy-colour'd carnadine,[2]
Your nutmeg hue, or gingerline,
Cloth-of-tissue or tabine,[3]
That like beaten gold will shine

[1] Fine.
[2] Carnation.
[3] "A sort of wrought silk: see in v. *The Rates of Marchandizes*, &c., in the reign of James I. Old ed. 'Tobine.'"—*Dyce.*

In your amorous ladies' eyne,
Whilst you their softer silks do twine?
What is't you lack, you lack, you lack?

Enter MISTRESS WATER-CAMLET.

Mis. W.-Cam. I do lack content, sir, content I lack; have you or your worshipful master here any content to sell?

Geo. If content be a stuff to be sold by the yard, you may have content at home, and never go abroad for't.

Mis. W.-Cam. Do, cut me three yards; I'll pay for 'em.

Geo. There's all we have i' the shop; we must know what you'll give for 'em first.

W.-Cam. Why, Rachel, sweet Rachel, my bosom Rachel,
How didst thou get forth? thou wert here, sweet Rac,
Within this hour, even in my very heart.

Mis. W.-Cam. Away! or stay still, I'll away from thee;
One bed shall never hold us both again,
Nor one roof cover us: didst thou bring home—

Geo. What is't you lack, you lack, you lack?

Mis. W.-Cam. Peace, bandog, bandog! give me leave to speak,
Or I'll——

Geo. Shall I not follow my trade? I'm bound to't, and my master bound to bring me up in't.

W.-Cam. Peace, good George; give her anger leave;
Thy mistress will be quiet presently.
Mis. W.-Cam. Quiet! I defy thee and quiet too;
Quiet thy bastards thou hast brought home.
Geo. and *Ral.* What is't you lack, you lack? &c.
Mis. W.-Cam. Death, give me an ell![1] has one bawling cur
Raised up another? two dogs upon me?
And the old bearward will not succour me,
I'll stave 'em off myself: give me an ell, I say!
Geo. Give her not an inch, master, she'll take two ells if you do.
W.-Cam. Peace, George and Ralph; no more words, I charge you:—
And Rachel, sweet wife, be more temperate:
I know your tongue speaks not by the rule
And guidance of your heart, when you proclaim
The pretty children of my virtuous
And noble kinswoman, whom in life you knew
Above my praises' reach, to be my bastards:
This is not well, although your anger did it;
Pray, chide your anger for it.
Mis. W.-Cam. Sir, sir, your gloss
Of kinswoman cannot serve turn; 'tis stale,
And smells too rank: though your shop-wares you vent[2]

[1] Cf. *2nd Pt. of the Honest Whore*, ii. 2:—
"*Bride.* Reach me an ell.
Lod. An ell for my mistress! [*Brings an ell-wand from the shop.*"

[2] Vend.

With your deceiving lights,[1] yet your chamber stuff
Shall not pass so with me; I say, and I'll prove—

Geo. What is't you lack?

Enter MARIA *and* EDWARD.

W.-Cam. Why, George, I say——

Mis. W.-Cam. Lecher, I say, I'll be divorc'd from thee;
I'll prove 'em thy bastards, and thou insufficient. [*Exit.*

Mar. What said my angry cousin[2] to you, sir?
That we were bastards?

Edw. I hope she meant not us.

W.-Cam. No, no,
My pretty cousins, she meant George and Ralph;
Rage will speak anything; but they're ne'er the worse.

Geo. Yes indeed, forsooth, she spoke to us, but chiefly to Ralph, because she knows he has but one stone.

Ral. No more of that, if you love me, George; this is not the way to keep a quiet house.

Mar. Truly, sir, I would not, for more treasure
Than ever I saw yet, be in your house
A cause of discord.

Edw. And do you think I would, sister?

Mar. No, indeed, Ned.

---

[1] See note 4, vol. i. p. 247. [2] See note, vol. i. p. 309.

Enter FRANKLIN *junior and* GEORGE CRESSINGHAM, *disguised.*

Edw. Why did you not speak for me with you then, and said we could not have done so?

W.-Cam. No more, sweet cousins, now.—Speak, George, customers approach.

G. Cres. Is the barber prepared?

Frank. jun. With ignorance enough to go through with it; so near I am to him, we must call cousins; would thou wert as sure to hit the tailor!

G. Cres. If I do not steal away handsomely, let me never play the tailor again.

Geo. What is't you lack? &c.

Frank. jun. Good satins, sir.

Geo. The best in Europe, sir; here's a piece worth a piece every yard of him; the king of Naples wears no better silk; mark his gloss, he dazzles the eye to look upon him.

Frank. jun. Is he not gummed?[1]

Geo. Gummed! he has neither mouth nor tooth, how can he be gummed?

Frank. jun. Very pretty.

W.-Cam. An especial good piece of silk; the worm never spun a finer thread, believe it, sir.

Frank. jun. Gascoyn, you have some skill in it.

W.-Cam. Your tailor, sir?

---

[1] It was a common practice to stiffen velvet and other stuffs with gum in order to make them sit well and have a glossy appearance.

Frank. jun. Yes, sir.

G. Cres. A good piece, sir; but let's see more choice.

Ral. Tailor, drive thorough; you know your bribes.

G. Cres. Mum: he bestows forty pounds, if I say the word.

Ral. Strike through; there's poundage for you then.

Frank. jun. Ay, marry, I like this better.—
What sayst thou, Gascoyn?

G. Cres. A good piece indeed, sir.

Geo. The great Turk has worse satin at's elbow than this, sir.

Frank. jun. The price?

W.-Cam. Look on the mark, George.

Geo. O, *Souse* and *P*, by my facks, sir.

W.-Cam. The best sort then; sixteen a yard, nothing to be bated.

Frank. jun. Fie, sir, fifteen's too high, yet so,—for how many yards will serve for my suit, sirrah?

G. Cres. Nine yards, you can have no less, Sir Andrew.

Frank. jun. But I can, sir, if you please to steal less; I had but eight in my last suit.

G. Cres. You pinch us too near, in faith, Sir Andrew.

Frank. jun. Yet can you pinch out a false pair of sleeves to a friezado doublet.

Geo. No, sir; some purses and pin-pillows perhaps: a tailor pays for his kissing that ways.

Frank. jun. Well, sir, eight yards; eight fifteens I give, and cut it.

W.-Cam. I cannot, truly, sir.

Geo. My master must be no subsidy-man, sir, if he take such fifteens.

Frank. jun. I am at highest, sir, if you can take money.

W.-Cam. Well, sir, I'll give you the buying once; I hope to gain it in your custom: want you nothing else, sir?

Frank. jun. Not at this time, sir.

G. Cres. Indeed but you do, Sir Andrew; I must needs deliver my lady's message to you, she enjoined me by oath to do it; she commanded me to move you for a new gown.

Frank. jun. Sirrah, I'll break your head, if you motion it again.

G. Cres. I must endanger myself for my lady, sir: you know she's to go to my lady Trenchmore's wedding; and to be seen there without a new gown! she'll have ne'er an eye to be seen there, for her fingers in 'em: nay, by my fack, sir, I do not think she'll go; and then, the cause known, what a discredit 'twill be to you!

Frank. jun. Not a word more, goodman snipsnapper, for your ears.—What comes this to, sir?

W.-Cam. Six pound, sir.

Frank. jun. There's your money. [*Gives money.*]—Will you take this, and be gone about your business presently?

G. Cres. Troth, sir, I'll see some stuffs for my lady first; I'll tell her, at least, I did my goodwill.—A fair piece of cloth-of-silver, pray you, now.

Geo. Or cloth-of-gold, if you please, sir, as rich as ever the Sophy wore.

Frank. jun. You are the arrantest villain of a tailor that ever sat cross-legged; what do you think a gown of this stuff will come to?

G. Cres. Why, say it be forty pound, sir, what's that to you? three thousand a-year I hope will maintain it.

Frank. jun. It will, sir; very good, you were best be my overseer: say I be not furnished with money, how then?

G. Cres. A very fine excuse in you! which place of ten now will you send me for a hundred pound, to bring it presently?

W.-Cam. Sir, sir, your tailor persuades you well; 'tis for your credit and the great content of your lady.

Frank. jun. 'Tis for your content, sir, and my charges. —Never think, goodman false-stitch, to come to the mercer's with me again: pray, will you see if my cousin Sweetball the barber—he's nearest hand—be furnished, and bring me word instantly.

G. Cres. I fly, sir. [*Exit.*

Frank. jun. You may fly, sir, you have clipt somebody's wings for it, to piece out your own; an arrant thief you are!

W.-Cam. Indeed he speaks honestly and justly, sir.

Frank. jun. You expect some gain, sir, there's your cause of love.

W.-Cam. Surely I do a little, sir.

Frank. jun. And what might be the price of this?

W.-Cam. This is thirty a yard; but if you'll go to forty, here's a nonpareil.

Frank. jun. So, there's a matter of forty pound for a gown-cloth?

W.-Cam. Thereabouts, sir: why, sir, there are far short of your means that wear the like.

Frank. jun. Do you know my means, sir?

Geo. By overhearing your tailor, sir,—three thousand a-year; but if you'd have a petticoat for your lady, here's a stuff.

Frank. jun. Are you another tailor, sirrah? here's a knave! what are you?

Geo. You are such another gentleman! but for the stuff, sir, 'tis *L.SS.* and *K*, for the turn stript[1] a' purpose; a yard and a quarter broad too, which is the just depth of a woman's petticoat.

Frank. jun. And why stript for a petticoat?

Geo. Because if they abuse their petticoats, there are abuses stript; then 'tis taking them up, and they may be stript and whipt too.[2]

Frank. jun. Very ingenious!

Geo. Then it is likewise stript standing, between which is discovered the open part, which is now called the placket.[3]

Frank. jun. Why, was it ever called otherwise?

Geo. Yes; while the word remained pure in his original, the Latin tongue, who have no K's, it was called the *placet; a placendo*, a thing or place to please.

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[1] Striped.

[2] "Stript and whipt."—An allusion to Wither's satire, *Abuses Stript and Whipt.*

[3] See note 3, vol. iv. p. 80.

Re-enter GEORGE CRESSINGHAM.

Frank. jun. Better and worse still.—Now, sir, you come in haste; what says my cousin?

G. Cres. Protest, sir, he's half angry, that either you should think him unfurnished, or not furnished for your use; there's a hundred pound ready for you: he desires you to pardon his coming; his folks are busy, and his wife trimming a gentleman; but at your first approach the money wants but telling.

Frank. jun. He would not trust you with it—I con him thanks [1]—for that he knows what trade you are of. —Well, sir, pray, cut him patterns; he may in the meantime know my lady's liking: let your man take the pieces whole, with the lowest prices, and walk with me to my cousin's.

W.-Cam. With all my heart, sir.—Ralph, your cloak, and go with the gentleman: look you give good measure.

G. Cres. Look you carry a good yard with you.

Ral. The best i' the shop, sir; yet we have none bad. —You'll have the stuff for the petticoat too?

Frank. jun. No, sir, the gown only.

G. Cres. By all means, sir: not the petticoat? that were holy-day upon working-day, i'faith.

Frank. jun. You are so forward for [2] a knave, sir.

G. Cres. 'Tis for your credit and my lady's both I do it, sir.

---

[1] "Con thanks" = return thanks.

[2] "So forward for a knave" = so forward a knave.—See note 1, vol. iii. p. 41.

Frank. jun. Your man is trusty, sir?

W.-Cam. O, sir, we keep none but those we dare trust, sir.—Ralph, have a care of light gold.

Ral. I warrant you, sir, I'll take none.

Frank. jun. Come, sirrah.—Fare you well, sir.

W.-Cam. Pray, know my shop another time, sir.

Frank. jun. That I shall, sir, from all the shops i' the town; 'tis the Lamb in Lombard Street.

[*Exeunt* FRANKLIN *jun.*, G. CRESSINGHAM, *and* RALPH *carrying the stuffs and a yard-measure.*

Geo. A good morning's work, sir; if this custom would but last long, you might shut up your shop and live privately.

W.-Cam. O George, but here's a grief that takes away all the gains and joy of all my thrift.

Geo. What's that, sir?

W.-Cam. Thy mistress, George; her forwardness sours all my comfort.

Geo. Alas, sir, they are but squibs and crackers, they'll soon die; you know her flashes of old.

W.-Cam. But they fly so near me, that they burn me, George;
They are as ill as muskets charg'd with bullets.

Geo. She has discharged herself now, sir; you need not fear her.

W.-Cam. No man can love without his affliction, George.

Geo. As you cannot without my mistress.

W.-Cam. Right, right; there's harmony in discords:

this lamp of love, while any oil is left, can never be extinct; it may, like a snuff, wink and seem to die, but up he will again and show his head: I cannot be quiet, George, without my wife at home.

Geo. And when she's at home you're never quiet, I'm sure; a fine life you have on't! Well, sir, I'll do my best to find her, and bring her back, if I can.

W.-Cam. Do, honest George; at Knavesby's house, that varlet's—

There is her haunt and harbour—who enforces
A kinsman on her, and [she] calls him cousin.
Restore her, George, to ease this heart that's vext,
The best new suit that e'er thou wor'st is next.

Geo. I thank you aforehand, sir. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Room in SWEETBALL'S *House.*

Enter FRANKLIN *jun. and* GEORGE CRESSINGHAM *disguised as before,* RALPH *carrying the stuffs and a yard-measure,* SWEETBALL, *and* Boy.

Sweet. Were it of greater moment than you speak of, noble sir, I hope you think me sufficient, and it shall be effectually performed.

Frank. jun. I could wish your wife did not know it, coz; women's tongues are not always tuneable; I may many ways requite it.

Sweet. Believe me, she shall not, sir; which will be the hardest thing of all.

Frank. jun. Pray you, despatch him then.

Sweet. With the celerity a man tells gold to him.

Frank. jun. He hits a good comparison. [*Aside.*] —Give my waste-good your stuffs, and go with my cousin, sir; he'll presently despatch you.

Ral. Yes, sir. [*Gives stuffs to* G. CRESSINGHAM.

Sweet. Come with me, youth, I am ready for you in my more private chamber.

[*Exeunt* SWEETBALL *and* RALPH.

Frank. jun. Sirrah, go you show your lady the stuffs, and let her choose her colour; away, you know whither. —Boy, prithee, lend me a brush i' the meantime.—Do you tarry all day now?

G. Cres. That I will, sir, and all night too, ere I come again. [*Exit with the stuffs.*

Boy. Here's a brush, sir. [*Gives brush.*

Frank. jun. A good child.

Sweet. [*within*] What, Toby!

Boy. Anon, sir.

Sweet. [*within*] Why, when,[1] goodman picklock?

Boy. I must attend my master, sir.—I come.

Frank. jun. Do, pretty lad. [*Exit* Boy.]—So, take water at Cole-Harbour:[2]
An easy mercer, and an innocent[3] barber! [*Exit with the brush.*

---

[1] An exclamation of impatience.
[2] See note 2, vol. ii. p. 277.
[3] Silly.

SCENE IV.

Another Room in SWEETBALL'S *House.*

Enter SWEETBALL, RALPH, *and* Boy.

Sweet. So, friend; I'll now despatch you presently.—Boy, reach me my dismembering instrument, and let my cauterize[r] be ready; and, hark you, snip-snap ——

Boy. Ay, sir.

Sweet. See if my *luxinium*,[1] my fomentation, be provided first; and get my rollers, bolsters,[2] and pledgets[3] armed. [*Exit* Boy.

Ral. Nay, good sir, despatch my business first; I should not stay from my shop.

Sweet. You must have a little patience, sir, when you are a patient: if *præputium* be not too much perished, you shall lose but little by it, believe my art for that.

Ral. What's that, sir?

Sweet. Marry, if there be exulceration between *præputium* and *glans*, by my faith, the whole *penis* may be endangered as far as *os pubis*.

Ral. What's this you talk on, sir?

---

1 "Occurs twice afterwards; and [p. 297] Ralph plays on the word: but qy. '*lixivium*?'"—*Dyce.*

2 "In Vigon's *Works of Chirurgerie*, 1571, various kinds of *bolsters* are described, that 'must be applyed in hollowe vlcers,' &c., fol. cxiii."—*Dyce.*

3 "A small plug; a piece of lint, by which the nostrils are plugged when excessive bleeding takes place."—*Halliwell.*

Sweet. If they be gangrened once, *testiculi*, *vesica*, and all may run to mortification.

Ral. What a pox does this barber talk on?

Sweet. O fie, youth! *pox* is no word of art; *morbus Gallicus*, or *Neapolitanus*, had been well: come, friend, you must not be nice; open your griefs freely to me.

Ral. Why, sir, I open my grief to you, I want my money.

Sweet. Take you no care for that; your worthy cousin has given me part in hand, and the rest I know he will upon your recovery, and I dare take his word.

Ral. 'Sdeath, where's my ware?

Sweet. Ware! that was well; the word is cleanly, though not artful; your ware it is that I must see.

Ral. My tabine[1] and cloth-of-tissue!

Sweet. You will neither have tissue nor issue, if you linger in your malady; better a member cut off than endanger the whole microcosm.

Ral. Barber, you are not mad?

Sweet. I do begin to fear you are subject to *subeth*,[2] unkindly sleeps, which have bred oppilations in your brain; take heed, the *symptoma* will follow, and this may come to frenzy! begin with the first cause, which is the pain of your member.

Ral. Do you see my yard, barber!

[*Holding up yard-measure.*

Sweet. Now you come to the purpose; 'tis that I must see indeed.

---

[1] Old ed. "Tobine."

[2] A sort of apoplexy.

Ral. You shall feel it, sir; death, give me my fifty pounds or my ware again, or I'll measure out your anatomy by the yard!

Sweet. Boy, my cauterizing iron red-hot!

Re-enter Boy *with the iron.*

Boy. 'Tis here, sir.

Sweet. If you go further, I take my dismembering knife.

Ral. Where's the knight, your cousin? the thief and the tailor, with my cloth-of-gold and tissue?

Boy. The gentleman that sent away his man with the stuffs is gone a pretty while since; he has carried away our new brush.

Sweet. O that brush hurts my heart's side? Cheated, cheated! he told me that your *virga* had a burning fever.

Ral. Pox on your *virga*, barber!

Sweet. And that you would be bashful, and ashamed to show your head.

Ral. I shall so, hereafter; but here it is, you see, yet, my head, my hair, and my wit; and here are my heels that I must show to my master, if the cheaters be not found: and, barber, provide thee plasters, I will break thy head with every basin under the pole. [*Exit.*

Sweet. Cool the *luxinium*, and quench the cauterizer;
I'm partly out of my wits, and partly mad;
My razor's at my heart; these storms will make
My sweet-balls stink, my harmless basins shake.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in LORD BEAUFORT'S *House.*

Enter MISTRESS GEORGE CRESSINGHAM *disguised as a page, and* MISTRESS KNAVESBY.

Mis. G. Cres. You're welcome, mistress, as I may speak it,
But my lord will give't a sweeter emphasis;
I'll give him knowledge of you. [*Going.*
Mis. Kna. Good sir, stay,
Methinks it sounds sweetest upon your tongue;
I'll wish you to go no further for my welcome.
Mis. G. Cres. Mine! it seems you never heard good music,
That commend a bagpipe: hear his harmony!
Mis. Kna. Nay, good now, let me borrow of your patience,
I'll pay you again before I rise to-morrow;
If it please you——
Mis. G. Cres. What would you, forsooth?
Mis. Kna. Your company, sir.

Mis. G. Cres. My attendance you should have, mistress, but that my lord expects it, and 'tis his due.

Mis. Kna. And must be paid upon the hour? that's too strict; any time of the day will serve.

Mis. G. Cres. Alas, 'tis due every minute! and paid, 'tis due again, or else I forfeit my recognisance, the cloth I wear of his.

Mis. Kna. Come, come; pay it double at another time and 'twill be quitted; I have a little use of you.

Mis. G. Cres. Of me, forsooth? small use can be made of me: if you have suit to my lord, none can speak better for you than you may yourself.

Mis. Kna. O, but I am bashful.

Mis. G. Cres. So am I, in troth, mistress.

Mis. Kna. Now I remember me, I have a toy to deliver your lord that's yet unfinished, and you may further me: pray you, your hands, while I unwind this skein of gold from you; 'twill not detain you long.

[*Putting skein on* MIS. G. CRESSINGHAM'S *hands.*

Mis. G. Cres. You wind me into your service prettily: with all the haste you can, I beseech you.

Mis. Kna. If it tangle not, I shall soon have done.

Mis. G. Cres. No, it shall not tangle, if I can help it, forsooth.

Mis. Kna. If it do, I can help it; fear not: this thing of long length you shall see I can bring you to a bottom.[1]

Mis. G. Cres. I think so too; if it be not bottomless this length will reach it.

[1] A ball of thread.

Mis. Kna. It becomes you finely; but I forewarn you and remember it, your enemy gain not this advantage of you; you are his prisoner then; for, look you, you are mine now, my captive manacled, I have your hands in bondage.

[*Grasps the skein between* MISTRESS GEORGE CRESSINGHAM'S *hands.*

Mis. G. Cres. 'Tis a good lesson, mistress, and I am perfect in it; another time I'll take out this, and learn another: pray you, release me now.

Mis. Kna. I could kiss you now, spite of your teeth, if it please me.

Mis. G. Cres. But you could not, for I could bite you with the spite of my teeth, if it pleases me.

Mis. Kna. Well, I'll not tempt you so far, I show it but for rudiment.

Mis. G. Cres. When I go a-wooing, I'll think on't again.

Mis. Kna. In such an hour I learnt it: say I should,
In recompense of your hands' courtesy,
Make you a fine wrist-favour of this gold,
With all the letters of your name emboss'd
On a soft tress of hair, which I shall cut
From mine own fillet, whose ends should meet and close
In a fast true-love knot, would you wear it
For my sake, sir?

Mis. G. Cres. I think not, truly, mistress;
My wrists have enough of this gold already;
Would they were rid on't yet! pray you, have done;
In troth, I'm weary.

Mis. Kna. And what a virtue
Is here express'd in you, which had lain hid
But for this trial: weary of gold, sir?
O that the close engrossers of this treasure
Could be so free to put it off of hand!
What a new-mended world would here be!
It shows a generous condition [1] in you;
In sooth, I think I shall love you dearly for't.

Mis. G. Cres. But if they were in prison, as I am,
They would be glad to buy their freedom with it.

Mis. Kna. Surely no; there are that, rather than release
This dear companion, do lie in prison
With it, yes, and will die in prison too.

Mis. G. Cres. 'Twere pity but the hangman did enfranchise both.

Enter LORD BEAUFORT.

L. Beau. Selenger, where are you?

Mis. G. Cres. E'en here, my lord.—Mistress, pray you, my liberty; you hinder my duty to my lord.

L. Beau. [*taking off his hat*] Nay, sir, one courtesy shall serve us both
At this time; you are busy, I perceive;
When your leisure next serves you, I'd employ you.

Mis. G. Cres. You must pardon me, my lord; you see I am entangled here.—Mistress, I protest I'll break prison, if you free me not: take you no notice?

[1] Disposition.

Mis. Kna. O, cry your honour mercy !—You are now at liberty, sir. [*Releasing her hands.*

Mis. G. Cres. And I'm glad on't ; I'll ne'er give both my hands at once again to a woman's command ; I'll put one finger in a hole rather.

L. Beau. Leave us.

Mis. G. Cres. Free leave have you, my lord, so I think you may have.—Filthy beauty, what a white witch thou art ! [*Exit.*

L. Beau. Lady, you're welcome.

Mis. Kna. I did believe it from your page, my lord.

L. Beau. Your husband sent you to me ?

Mis. Kna. He did, my lord ;
With duty and commends unto your honour,
Beseeching you to use me very kindly,
By the same token your lordship gave him grant
Of a new lease of threescore pounds a-year,
Which he and his should forty years enjoy.

L. Beau. The token's true ; and for your sake, lady,
'Tis likely to be better'd ; not alone the lease,
But the fee-simple may be his and yours.

Mis. Kna. I have a suit unto your lordship too,
Only myself concerns.

L. Beau. 'Twill be granted, sure,
Though it outvalue thy husband's.

Mis. Kna. Nay, 'tis small charge ;
Only your good will and good word, my lord.

L. Beau. The first is thine confirm'd ; the second, then,
Cannot stay long behind.

Mis. Kna. I love your page, sir.
L. Beau. Love him ! for what ?
Mis. Kna. O the great wisdoms that
Our grandsires had ! do you ask me reason for't ?
I love him 'cause I like him, sir.
L. Beau. My page !
Mis. Kna. In mine eye he is a most delicate youth,
But in my heart a thing that it would bleed for.
L. Beau. Either your eye's blinded or your remembrance broken ;
Call to mind wherefore you came hither, lady.
Mis. Kna. I do, my lord ; for love ; and I'm in profoundly.
L. Beau. You trifle, sure ; do you long for unripe fruit ?
'Twill breed diseases in you.
Mis. Kna. Nothing but worms
In my belly, and there's a seed to expel them ;
In mellow, falling fruit I find no relish.
L. Beau. 'Tis true the youngest vines yields the most clusters,
But the old ever the sweetest grapes.
Mis. Kna. I can taste of both, sir ;
But with the old I am the soonest cloy'd,
The green keep still an edge on appetite.
L. Beau. Sure you're a common creature.
Mis. Kna. Did you doubt it ?
Wherefore came I hither else ? did you think
That honesty only had been immur'd for you,
And I should bring it as an offertory

Unto your shrine of lust? As 'twas, my lord,
'Twas meant to you, had not the slippery wheel
Of fancy turn'd when I beheld your page;
Nay, had I seen another before him
In mine eyes better grace, he had been forestall'd;
But as it is—all my strength cannot help—
Beseech you, your good will and good word, my lord;
You may command him, sir; if not affection,
Yet his body; and I desire but that: do it,
And I'll command myself your prostitute.

L. Beau. You're a base strumpet! I succeed my page!

Mis. Kna. O, that's no wonder, my lord; the servant oft
Tastes to his master of the daintiest dish
He brings to him: beseech you, my lord——

L. Beau. You're a bold mischief; and to make me your spokesman,
Your procurer to my servant!

Mis. Kna. Do you shrink at that?
Why, you've done worse without the sense of ill,
With a full, free conscience of a libertine:
Judge your own sin;
Was it not worse, with a damn'd broking-fee
To corrupt[1] a husband, 'state him a pander
To his own wife, by virtue of a lease
Made to him and your bastard issue, could you get 'em?

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[1] Old ed. "a corrupt husband."

What a degree of baseness call you this?
'Tis a poor sheep-steal[er], provok'd by want,
Compar'd unto a capital traitor: the master
To his servant may be recompens'd, but the husband
To his wife never.

L. Beau. Your husband shall smart for this. [*Exit.*

Mis. Kna. Hang him, do! you have brought him to deserve it;
Bring him to the punishment, there I'll join with you;
I loathe him to the gallows! hang your page too;
One mourning gown shall serve for both of them.
This trick hath kept mine honesty secure;
Best soldiers use policy; the lion's skin
Becomes the[1] body not when 'tis too great,
But then the fox's may sit close and neat. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Street.

Enter SWEETBALL, FLESH-HOOK, *and* COUNTERBUFF.

Sweet. Now, Flesh-hook, use thy talon, set upon his right shoulder; thy sergeant, Counterbuff, at the left; grasp in his jugulars; and then let me alone to tickle his *diaphragma*.

Flesh. You are sure he has no protection, sir?

Sweet. A protection to cheat and cozen! there was never any granted to that purpose.

---

[1] Old ed. "not the body when."

Flesh. I grant you that too, sir; but that use has been made of 'em.

Coun. Marry has there, sir? how could else so many broken bankrupts play up and down by their creditors' noses, and we dare not touch 'em? 12

Sweet. That's another case, Counterbuff; there's privilege to cozen, but here cozenage went before, and there's no privilege for that: to him boldly, I will spend all the scissors in my shop, but I'll have him snapt.

Coun. Well, sir, if he come within the length of large mace once, we'll teach him to cozen.

Sweet. Marry, hang him! teach him no more cozenage, he's too perfect in't already; go gingerly about it; lay your mace[1] on gingerly, and spice him soundly. 21

Coun. He's at the tavern, you say?

Sweet. At the Man in the Moon, above stairs; so soon as he comes down, and the bush[2] left at his back, Ralph is the dog behind him; he watches to give us notice: be ready then, my dear bloodhounds; you shall deliver him to Newgate, from thence to the hangman: his body I will beg of the sheriffs, for at the next lecture I am likely to be the master of my anatomy; then will I vex every vein about him; I will find where his disease of cozenage lay, whether in the *vertebræ* or in *os coxendix*;[3] but

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[1] See note 3, vol. iii. p. 300.

[2] (1) The bush hung at the vintner's door; (2) the bush carried by the Man in the Moon.

[3] "Comes nearest to the reading of old ed. 'Oscox-Index:' but qy. '*os coccygis*?'"—*Dyce.*

I guess I shall find it descend from *humore*, through the *thorax*, and lie just at his fingers'-ends.

Enter RALPH.

Ral. Be in readiness, for he's coming this way, alone too; stand to't like gentlemen and yeomen: so soon as he is in sight, I'll go fetch my master.

Sweet. I have had a conquassation in my *cerebrum* ever since the disaster, and now it takes me again; if it turn to a megrim, I shall hardly abide the sight of him.

Ral. My action of defamation shall be clapt on him too; I will make him appear to't in the shape of a white sheet, all embroidered over with *peccavis:* look about, I'll go fetch my master. [*Exit.*

Enter FRANKLIN *junior.*

Coun. I arrest you, sir.

Frank. jun. Ha! qui va là? que pensez-vous faire, messieurs? me voulez-vous dérober? je n'ai point d'argent: je suis un pauvre gentilhomme François.

Sweet. Whoop! pray you, sir, speak English; you did when you bought cloth-of-gold at six *nihils* a-yard, when Ralph's *præputium* was exulcerated.

Frank. jun. Que voulez-vous? me voulez-vous tuer? les François ne sont point ennemis: voilà ma bourse; que voulez vous d'avantage?

Coun. Is not your name Franklin, sir?

Frank. jun. Je n'ai point de joyaux que cestui-ci, et c'est à

monsieur l'ambassadeur; il m'envoie à ses affaires, et vous empêchez mon service.

Coun. Sir, we are mistaken, for ought I perceive.

Enter WATER-CAMLET *with* RALPH, *hastily.*

W.-Cam. So, so; you have caught him, that's well.—How do you, sir?

Frank. jun. Vous semblez être un homme courtois, je vous prie entendez mes affaires; il y a ici deux ou trois canailles qui m'ont assiégé, un pauvre étranger, qui ne leur ai fait nul mal, ni donné mauvaise parole, ni tiré mon épée; l'un me prend par une épaule, et me frappe deux livres pesant; l'autre me tire par le bras, il parle je ne sais quoi: je leur ai donné ma bourse, et s'ils ne me veulent point laisser aller, que ferai-je, monsieur?

W.-Cam. This is a Frenchman, it seems, sirs.

Coun. We can find no other in him, sir; and what that is we know not.

W.-Cam. He's very like the man we seek for, else my lights go false.

Sweet. In your shop[1] they may, sir, but here they go true; this is he.

Ral. The very same, sir; as sure as I am Ralph, this is the rascal.

Coun. Sir, unless you will absolutely challenge him the man, we dare not proceed further.

Flesh. I fear we are too far already.

W.-Cam. I know not what to say to't.

[1] See note 4, vol. i. p. 247.

Enter MARGARITA.

Mar. Bon jour, bon jour, gentilhommes.

Sweet. How now? more news from France?

Frank. jun. Cette femme ici est de mon pays.—Madame, je vous prie leur dire mon pays ; ils m'ont retargé,[1] *je ne sais pourquoi.*

Mar. Etes-vous de France, monsieur?

Frank. jun. Madame, vrai est, que je les ai trompés, et suis arrêté, et n'ai nul moyen d'échapper qu'en changeant mon langage : aidez-moi en cette affaire ; je vous connois bien, où vous tenez un bordeau ; vous et les votres en serez de mieux.

Mar. Laissez faire à moi. Etes-vous de Lyons, dites-vous? 93

Frank. jun. De Lyon, ma chère dame.

Mar. Mon cousin! je suis bien aise de vous voir en bonne disposition. [*They embrace and compliment.*

Frank. jun. Ma cousine!

W.-Cam. This is a Frenchman sure.

Sweet. If he be, 'tis the likest an Englishman that ever I saw, all his dimensions, proportions; had I but the dissecting of his heart, in *capsula cordis* could I find it now; for a Frenchman's heart is more quassative and subject to tremor than an Englishman's. 103

W.-Cam. Stay, we'll further inquire of this gentlewoman.—Mistress, if you have so much English to help us with—as I think you have, for I have long seen you about London—pray, tell us, and truly tell us, is this gentleman a natural Frenchman or no?

[1] *Retardé.*

Mar. Ey, begar, de Frenchman, born *à Lyons*, my cozin.

W.-Cam. Your cousin? if he be not your cousin, he's my cousin, sure.

Mar. Ey connosh his *père*, what you call his fadre; he sell *poissons.*

Sweet. Sell poisons? his father was a 'pothecary then.

Mar. No, no, *poissons*,—what you call fish, fish.

Sweet. O, he was a fishmonger.

Mar. Oui, oui.

W.-Cam. Well, well, we are mistaken, I see; pray you, so tell him, and request him not to be offended; an honest man may look like a knave, and be ne'er the worse for't: the error was in our eyes, and now we find it in his tongue.

Mar. J'essayerai encore une fois, monsieur cousin, pour votre sauveté; allez-vous en; votre liberté est suffisante: je gagnerai le reste pour mon devoir, et vous aurez votre part à mon école; j'ai une fille qui parle un peu François; elle conversera avec vous à la Fleur-de-Lis en Turnbull Street.[1] *Mon cousin, ayez soin de vous-même, et trompez ces ignorans.*

Frank. jun. Cousin, pour l'amour de vous, et principalement pour moi, je suis content de m'en aller: je trouverai votre école; et si vos écoliers me sont agréables, je tirerai à l'épée seule; et si d'aventure je la rompe, je payerai dix sous; et pour ce vieux fol, et ces deux canailles, ce poulain

[1] A disreputable street in Clerkenwell.

snip-snap, et l'autre bonnet rond, je les verrai pendre premier que je les vois. [*Exit.*

W.-Cam. So, so, she has got him off, but I perceive much anger in his countenance still.—And what says he, madam?

Mar. Moosh, moosh anger; but ey connosh heer lodging shall cool him very well; dere is a kinswomans can moosh allay heer heat and heer spleen; she shall do for my saka, and he no trobla you.

W.-Cam. [*giving money*] Look, there is earnest, but thy reward's behind; come to my shop, the Holy Lamb in Lombard Street: thou hast one friend more than e'er thou hadst.

Mar. Tank u, monsieur, shall visit u; ey make all pacifie: *à votre service très humblement*,—tree, four, five fool of u. [*Aside, and exit.*

W.-Cam. What's to be done now?

Coun. To pay us for our pains, sir; and better reward us, that we may be provided against further danger that may come upon 's for false imprisonment.

W.-Cam. All goes false, I think. What do you, neighbour Sweetball?

Sweet. I must phlebotomise, sir, but my almanac says the sign is in Taurus; I dare not cut my own throat; but if I find any precedent that ever barber hanged himself, I'll be the second example.

Ral. This was your ill *luxinium*, barber, to cause all to be cheated.

Coun. What say you to us, sir?

W.-Cam. Good friends, come to me at a calmer hour,

My sorrows lie in heaps upon me now:
What you have, keep; if further trouble follow,
I'll take it on me: I would be press'd to death.

Coun. Well, sir, for this time we'll leave you.

Sweet. I will go with you, officers; I will walk with you in the open street, though it be a scandal to me; for now I have no care of my credit, a cacokenny[1] is run all over me. 174

[*Exeunt* SWEETBALL, FLESH-HOOK, *and* COUNTERBUFF.

W.-Cam. What shall we do now, Ralph?

Ral. Faith, I know not, sir: here comes George, it may be he can tell you.

W.-Cam. And there I look for more disaster still;
Yet George appears in a smiling countenance.

Enter GEORGE.

Ralph, home to the shop; leave George and I together.

Ral. I am gone, sir. [*Exit.* 181

W.-Cam. Now George, what better news eastward? all goes ill t'other way.

Geo. I bring you the best news that ever came about your ears in your life, sir.

W.-Cam. Thou puttest me in good comfort, George.

Geo. My mistress, your wife, will never trouble you more.

W.-Cam. Ha! never trouble me more? of this, George,

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[1] A corruption of "cacochymy."

may be made a sad construction; that phrase we sometimes use when death makes the separation; I hope it is not so with her, George?

Geo. No, sir, but she vows she'll never come home again to you; so you shall live quietly; and this I took to be very good news, sir.

W.-Cam. The worst that could be this, candied poison:
I love her, George, and I am bound to do so;
The tongue's bitterness must not separate
United[1] souls: 'twere base and cowardly
For all to yield to the small tongue's assault:
The whole building must not be taken down
For the repairing of a broken window.

Geo. Ay, but this is a principal, sir: the truth is, she will be divorced, she says, and is labouring with her cousin Knave—what do you call him? I have forgotten the latter end of his name.

W.-Cam. Knavesby, George.

Geo. Ay, Knave, or Knavesby, one I took it to be.

W.-Cam. Why, neither rage nor envy can make a cause, George.

Geo. Yes, sir; not only at your person, but she shoots at your shop too; she says you vent ware that is not warrantable, braided ware, and that you give not London measure; women, you know, look for more than a bare yard: and then you keep children in the name of your own, which she suspects came not in at the right door.

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[1] Old ed. "the *united*."

W.-Cam. She may as well suspect immaculate truth
To be curs'd falsehood.

Geo. Ay, but if she will, she will; she's a woman, sir.

W.-Cam. 'Tis most true, George; well, that shall be redress'd;
My cousin Cressingham must yield me pardon,
The children shall home again, and thou shalt conduct 'em, George.

Geo. That done, I'll be bold to venture once more for her recovery, since you cannot live at liberty, but because you are a rich citizen, you will have your chain[1] about your neck: I think I have a device will bring you together by th' ears again, and then look to 'em as well as you can.

W.-Cam. O George, 'mongst all my heavy troubles, this
Is the groaning weight; but [O] restore my wife!

Geo. Although you ne'er lead hour of quiet life.

W.-Cam. I will endeavour 't, George; I'll lend her will
A power and rule to keep all hush'd and still:
Eat we all sweetmeats, we are soonest rotten.

Geo. A sentence! pity 't should have been forgotten!

[*Exeunt.*

[1] Gold chains were formerly worn by persons of quality, particularly by rich merchants.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A Room in Sir FRANCIS CRESSINGHAM'S *House.*

Enter Sir FRANCIS CRESSINGHAM *and* Surveyor *severally.*

Sur. Where's master steward?

Sir F. Cres. Within: what are you, sir?

Sur. A surveyor, sir.

Sir F. Cres. And an almanac-maker, I take it; can you tell me what foul weather is toward?[1]

Sur. Marry, the foulest weather is, that your land is flying away. [*Exit.*

Sir F. Cres. A most terrible prognostication! All the resort, all the business to my house is to my lady and master steward, whilst Sir Francis stands for a cipher; I have made away myself and my power, as if I had done it by deed of gift: here comes the comptroller of the game.

[1] At hand.

Sir F. Cres. You promise fair; I come now to make trial of it. You know I have married one whom I hold so dear, that my whole life is nothing but a mere estate depending upon her will and her affections to me; she deserves so well, I cannot longer merit than *durante bene placita:* 'tis her pleasure, and her wisdom moves in't too, of which I'll give you ample satisfaction hereafter, that I sell the land my father left me: you change colour! I have promised her to do't; and should I fail, I must expect the remainder of my life as full of trouble and vexation as the suit for a divorce: it lies in you, by setting of your hand unto the sale, to add length to his life that gave you yours. 81

G. Cres. Sir, I do now ingeniously perceive why you said lately somewhat I should write would be my undoing, meaning, as I take it, setting my hand to this assurance. O, good sir, shall I pass away my birthright? O, remember there is a malediction denounced against it in holy writ! Will you, for her pleasure, the inheritance of desolation leave to your posterity? think how compassionate the creatures of the field, that only live on the wild benefits[1] of nature, are unto their young ones; think likewise you may have more children by this woman, and by this act you undo them too. 'Tis a strange precedent 92

[1] So Webster in *The Duchess of Malfi*, iii. 5:

"The birds that live i' the field
On *the wild benefit of nature* live
Happier than we."

Dyce remarks that the expression may be traced to Sir Philip Sidney —"to have for food *the wild benefits of nature.*" *Arcadia*, b. iv. p. 426, ed. 1633.

this, to see an obedient son labouring good counsel to the father; but know, sir, that the spirits of my great-grandfather and your father moves at this present in me, and what they bequeathed you on their[1] deathbed, they charge you not to give away in the dalliance of a woman's bed. Good sir, let it not be thought presumption in me that I have continued my speech unto this length; the cause, sir, is urgent, and, believe it, you shall find her beauty as malevolent unto you as a red morning, that doth still foretell a foul day to follow. O sir, keep your land! keep that to keep your name immortal, and you shall see

All that her malice and proud will procures
Shall show her ugly heart but hurt not yours.

Sir F. Cres. O, I am distracted, and my very soul sends blushes into my cheeks!

Enter GEORGE *with* MARIA *and* EDWARD.

G. Cres. See here an object to beget more compassion.

Geo. O, Sir Francis, we have a most lamentable house at home! nothing to be heard in't but separation and divorces, and such a noise of the spiritual court as if it were a tenement upon London Bridge, and built upon the arches.[2]

Sir F. Cres. What's the matter?

[1] Old ed. "your."

[2] (1) Arches of London Bridge; (2) Court of Arches.

Geo. All about boarding your children: my mistress is departed.

Sir F. Cres. Dead!

Geo. In a sort she is, and laid out too, for she is run away from my master.

Sir F. Cres. Whither?

Geo. Seven miles off, into Essex; she vowed never to leave Barking while she lived, till these were brought home again.

Sir F. Cres. O, they shall not offend her: I am sorry for't.

Maria.[1] I am glad we are come home, sir; for we lived in the unquietest house!

Edw.[2] The angry woman, methought, grutched[3] us our victuals; our new mother is a good soul, and loves us, and does not frown so like a vixen as she does.

Maria. I am at home now, and in heaven, methinks: what a comfort 'tis to be under your wing!

Edw. Indeed, my mother was wont to call me your nestle-cock, and I love you as well as she did.

Sir F. Cres. You are my pretty souls!

G. Cres. Does not the prattle of these move you?

Re-enter SAUNDER *with* KNAVESBY, *and* Surveyor.

Saun. Look you, sir, here's the conveyance and my lady's solicitor; pray resolve what to do, my lady is

[1] Old ed. "1 *Childe.*"
[2] Old ed. "2 *Childe.*"
[3] Grudged.

coming down.—How now, George? how does thy mistress, that sits in a wainscot-gown,[1] like a citizen's lure to draw in customers? O, she's a pretty mouse-trap!

Geo. She's ill baited though to take a Welshman, she cannot away with cheese.

Sir F. Cres. And what must I do now?

Kna. Acknowledge a fine and recovery of the land; then for possession the course is common.

Sir F. Cres. Carry back the writings, sir; my mind is changed.

Saun. Changed! do not you mean to seal?

Enter LADY CRESSINGHAM.

Sir F. Cres. No, sir, the tide's turned.

Saun. You must temper him like wax, or he'll not seal.

L. Cres. Are you come back again?—How now, have you done?

Maria. How do you, lady mother?

L. Cres. You are good children.—Bid my woman give them some sweetmeats.

Maria. Indeed, I thank you:—is not this a kind mother?

G. Cres. Poor fools, you know not how dear you shall pay for this sugar!

[*Exeunt* GEORGE *with* MARIA *and* EDWARD.

L. Cres. What, ha'n't you despatched?

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[1] I cannot give any satisfactory meaning to the expression "wainscot-gown." Dyce suggests "waistcoat-gown."

Sir F. Cres. No, sweetest, I'm dissuaded by my son
From the sale o' the land.

L. Cres. Dissuaded by your son!

Sir F. Cres. I cannot get his hand to't.

L. Cres. Where's our steward?
Cause presently that all my beds and hangings
Be taken down; provide carts, pack them up:
I'll to my house i' the country: have I studied
The way to your preferment and your children's,
And do you cool i' th' upshot?

G. Cres. With your pardon,
I cannot understand this course a way
To any preferment, rather a direct
Path to our ruin.

L. Cres. O, sir, you're young-sighted:—
Show them the project of the land I mean
To buy in Ireland, that shall outvalue yours
Three thousand in a year.

Kna. [*showing map.*] Look you, sir; here is Clangibbon, a fruitful country, and well wooded.

Sir F. Cres. What's this? marsh ground?

Kna. No, these are bogs, but a little cost will drain them: this upper part, that runs by the black water, is the Cossack's land,—a spacious country, and yields excellent profit by the salmon and fishing for herring; here runs the Kernesdale, admirable feed for cattle; and hereabout is St. Patrick's Purgatory.[1]

[1] A cavern at Logh Derg, in the south of Donegal. Pilgrimages were frequently made to it. See note in Dodsley's *Old Plays*, ed. Hazlitt, i. 339.

G. Cres. Purgatory? shall we purchase that too?

L. Cres. Come, come, will you despatch the other business,
We may go through with this?

Sir F. Cres. My son's unwilling.

L. Cres. Upon my soul, sir, I'll ne'er bed with you
Till you have seal'd.

Sir F. Cres. Thou hear'st her: on thy blessing
Follow me to the court, and seal.

G. Cres. Sir, were it my death, were't to the loss of my estate, I vow to obey you in all things; yet with it remember there are two young ones living that may curse you; I pray dispose part of the money on their generous educations.

L. Cres. Fear no[t] you, sir.—The caroach there!—When you have despatched, you shall find me at the scrivener's, where I shall receive the money.

G. Cres. She'll devour that mass too.

L. Cres. How likest thou my power over him?

Saun. Excellent.

L. Cres. This is the height of a great lady's sway,
When her night-service makes her rule i' the day.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Hall in KNAVESBY'S *House.*

Enter KNAVESBY.

Kna. Not yet, Sib? my lord keeps thee so long, thou'rt welcome, I see then, and pays sweetly too: a good wench,

Sib, thou'rt, to obey thy husband. She's come: a hundred mark a-year, how fine and easy it comes into mine arms now!—

Enter MISTRESS KNAVESBY.

Welcome home! what says my lord, Sib?

Mis. Kna. My lord says you are a cuckold!

Kna. Ha, ha, ha, ha! I thank him for that bob, i'faith; I'll afford it him again at the same price a month hence, and let the commodity grow as scarce as it will. Cuckold, says his lordship? ha, ha! I shall burst my sides with laughing, that's the worst; name not a hundred [a]-year, for then I burst. It smarts not so much as a fillip on the forehead by five parts: what has his dalliance taken from thy lips? 'tis as sweet as e'er 'twas; let me try else; buss me, sugar-candy.

Mis. Kna. Forbear! you presume to a lord's pleasure!

Kna. How's that? not I, Sib.

Mis. Kna. Never touch me more;
I'll keep the noble stamp upon my lip,
No under baseness shall deface it now:
You taught me the way,
Now I am in, I'll keep it; I have kiss'd
Ambition, and I love it; I loathe the memory
Of every touch my lip hath tasted from thee.

Kna. Nay, but, sweet Sib, you do forget yourself.

Mis. Kna. I will forget all that I ever was,
And nourish new [thoughts]; sirrah, I am a lady.

Kna. Lord bless us, madam!

Mis Kna. I've enjoy'd a lord,
That's real possession, and daily shall,
The which all ladies have not with their lords.

Kna. But, with your patience, madam, who was it that preferred you to this ladyship?

Mis. Kna. 'Tis all I am beholding to thee for;
Thou'st brought me out of ignorance into light:
Simple as I was, I thought thee a man,
[Un]till I found the difference by a man;
Thou art a beast, a hornèd beast, an ox!

Kna. Are these ladies' terms?

Mis. Kna. For thy pander's fee,
It shall be laid under the candlestick;
Look for't, I'll leave it for thee.

Kna. A little lower,
Good your ladyship, my cousin Camlet
Is in the house; let these things go no further.

Mis. Kna. 'Tis for mine own credit if I forbear, not thine, thou bugle-browed[1] beast thou!

Enter GEORGE, *with rolls of paper in his hand.*

Geo. Bidden, bidden, bidden, bidden; so, all these are past, but here's as large a walk to come: if I do not get it up at the feast, I shall be leaner for bidding the guests, I'm sure.

Kna. How now? who's this?

Geo. [*reads.*] *Doctor Glister et*—what word's this?

[1] Horned.

f-u-x-o-r—O, *uxor*—the doctor and his wife—*Master Body et uxor of Bow Lane, Master Knavesby et uxor.*

Kna. Ha! we are in, whatsoever the matter is.

Geo. Here's forty couple more in this quarter; but there, the provision bringing in, that puzzles me most. [*Reads*] *One ox*,—that will hardly serve for beef too; —*five muttons, ten lambs*,—poor innocents, they'll be devoured too!—*three gross of capons*——

Kna. Mercy upon us! what a slaughter-house is here! *Geo.* [*reads*] *Two bushels of small birds, plovers, snipes, woodcocks, partridge*[*s*], *larks*;—then for baked meats——

Kna. George, George, what feast is this? 'tis not for St. George's day? 63

Geo. Cry you mercy, sir; you and your wife are in my roll: my master invites you his guests to-morrow dinner.

Kna. Dinner, say'st thou? he means to feast a month sure.

Geo. Nay, sir, you make up but a hundred couple.

Kna. Why, what ship has brought an India home to him, that he's so bountiful? or what friend dead—unknown to us—has so much left to him of arable land, that he means to turn to pasture thus? 73

Geo. Nay, 'tis a vessel, sir; a good estate comes all in one bottom to him, and 'tis a question whether ever he find the bottom or no; a thousand a-year, that's the uppermost.

Kna. A thousand a-year!

Geo. To go no further about the bush, sir, now the bird is caught, my master is to-morrow to be married,

and, amongst the rest, invites you a guest at his wedding-dinner the second.

Kna. Married!

Geo. There is no other remedy for flesh and blood, that will have leave to play, whether we will or no, or wander into forbidden pastures.

Kna. Married! why, he is married, man; his wife is in my house now; thy mistress is alive, George.

Geo. She that was, it may be, sir, but dead to him; she played a little too rough with him, and he has discarded her; he's divorced, sir.

Kna. He divorced! then is her labour saved, for she was labouring a divorce from him.

Geo. They are well parted then, sir.

Kna. But wilt thou not speak with her? i'faith, invite her to't.

Geo. 'Tis not in my commission, I dare not. Fare you well, sir; I have much business in hand, and the time is short.

Kna. Nay, but, George, I prithee, stay; may I report this to her for a certain truth?

Geo. Wherefore am I employed in this invitation, sir?

Kna. Prithee, what is she his second choice?

Geo. Truly, a goodly presence, likely to bear great children, and great store; she never saw five-and-thirty summers together in her life by her appearance, and comes in her French hood; by my fecks, a great match 'tis like to be: I am sorry for my old mistress, but cannot help it. Pray you, excuse me now, sir; for all

the business goes through my hands, none employed but myself. [*Exit.* 112

Kna. Why, here is news that no man will believe but he that sees.

Mis. Kna. This and your cuckoldry will be digestion throughout the city dinners and suppers for a month together; there will need no cheese.

Kna. No more of that, Sib: I'll call my cousin Camlet, and make her partaker of this sport.

Enter MISTRESS WATER-CAMLET.

She's come already.—Cousin, take't at once, you're a free woman; your late husband's to be married to-morrow. 122

Mis. W.-Cam. Married! to whom?

Kna. To a French hood, byrlakins,[1] as I understand; great cheer prepared, and great guests invited; so far I know.

Mis. W.-Cam. What a cursed wretch was I to pare my nails to-day! a Friday too; I looked for some mischief.

Kna. Why, I did think this had accorded with your best liking; 130

You sought for him what he has sought for you,
A separation, and by divorce too.

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[1] *i.e.*, by our lady-kin,—our little lady. So in Fletcher's *Nice Valour*, iii. 1:—

> "*Byrlakin*, sir, the difference of long tags
> Has cost many a man's life."

Mis. W.-Cam. I'll divorce 'em! is he to be married to a French hood? I'll dress it the English fashion: ne'er a coach to be had with six horses to strike fire i' the streets as we go?

Kna. Will you go home then?

Mis. W.-Cam. Good cousin, help me to whet one of my knives, while I sharp the t'other; give me a sour apple to set my teeth a'n edge; I would give five pound for the paring of my nails again! have you e'er a bird-spit i' the house? I'll dress one dish to the wedding. 142

Kna. This violence hurts yourself the most.

Mis. W.-Cam. I care not who I hurt: O my heart, how it beats a' both sides! Will you run with me for a wager into Lombard Street now?

Kna. I'll walk with you, cousin, a sufficient pace; Sib shall come softly after; I'll bring you thorough Bear-binder Lane.

Mis. W.-Cam. Bearbinder Lane cannot hold me, I'll the nearest way over St. Mildred's church: if I meet any French hoods by the way, I'll make black patches enow for the rheum. 153

[*Exeunt* MISTRESS WATER-CAMLET *and* KNAVESBY.

Mis. Kna. So, 'tis to my wish. Master Knavesby,
Help to make peace abroad, here you'll find wars;
I'll have a divorce too, with locks and bars. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Room in WATER-CAMLET'S *House.*

Enter GEORGE *and* MARGARITA.

Geo. Madam, but stay here a little, my master comes instantly; I heard him say he did owe you a good turn, and now's the time to take it; I'll warrant you a sound reward ere you go.

Mar. Ey tank u *de bon cœur, monsieur.*

Enter WATER-CAMLET.

Geo. Look, he's here already.—Now would a skilful navigator take in his sails, for sure there is a storm towards. [*Aside, and exit.*

W.-Cam. O madam, I perceive in your countenance—I am beholding to you—all is peace?

Mar. All quiet, goor frendsheep; ey mooch a do, ey strive wid him; give goor worda for you, no more speak a de matra; all es undonne, u no more trobla.

Enter behind MISTRESS WATER-CAMLET *and* KNAVESBY.

W.-Cam. Look, there's the price of a fair pair of gloves,
And wear 'em for my sake. [*Gives money.*

Mis. W.-Cam. O, O, O! my heart's broke out of my ribs!

Kna. Nay, a little patience.

Mar. Ey tank u artely; shall no bestow en gloves, shall put moosh more to dees, an bestow your shop: regarde dees stofa, my petticote, u no soosh anodre; shall deal wid u for moosh; take in your hand.

W.-Cam. I see it, mistress, 'tis good stuff indeed,
It is a silk rash;[1] I can pattern it.

Mis. W.-Cam. Shall he take up her coats before my face? O beastly creature! [*Coming forward.*] French hood, French hood, I will make your hair grow thorough.[2]

W.-Cam. My wife return'd!—O, welcome home, sweet Rachel!

Mis. W.-Cam. I forbid the banes,[3] lecher!—and, strumpet, thou shalt bear children without noses!

Mar. O, *pardonnez-moi;* by my trat, ey mean u no hurta: wat u meant by dees?

Mis. W.-Cam. I will have thine eyes out, and thy bastards shall be as blind as puppies!

W.-Cam. Sweet Rachel!—Good cousin, help to pacify.

Mis. W.-Cam. I forbid the banes, adulterer!

W.-Cam. What means she by that, sir?

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[1] "A kind of inferior silk. It is mentioned by Harrison, p. 163."—*Halliwell.*

[2] "An allusion to a proverbial saying:

'There is a nest of chickens which he doth brood
That will sure *make his hayre growe through his hood.*'
Heywood's *Dialogue*, sig. G 2,—*Workes*, ed. 1598.

Ray gives '*His hair grows through his hood*—He is very poor, his hood is full of holes.' *Proverbs*, p. 57, ed. 1768."—*Dyce.*

[3] Bans.

Kna. Good cousin, forbid your rage awhile; unless you hear, by what sense will you receive satisfaction? [*Restraining her.*

Mis. W.-Cam. By my hands and my teeth, sir; give me leave! will you bind me whiles mine enemy kills me?

W.-Cam. Here all are your friends, sweet wife.

Mis. W.-Cam. Wilt have two wives? do, and be[1] hanged, fornicator! I forbid the banes: give me the French hood, I'll tread it under feet in a pair of pantofles.[2]

Mar. Begar, shall save hood, head, and all; shall come no more heer, ey warran u. [*Exit.*

Kna. Sir, the truth is, report spoke it for truth
You were to-morrow to be marrièd.

Mis. W.-Cam. I forbid the banes!

W.-Cam. Mercy deliver me!
If my grave embrace me in the bed of death,
I would to church with willing ceremony;
But for my wedlock-fellow, here she is,
The first and last that e'er my thoughts look'd on.

Kna. Why, la, you, cousin, this was nought but error,
Or an assault of mischief.

W.-Cam. Whose report was it?

Kna. Your man George's, who invited me to the wedding.

W.-Cam. George! and was he sober? good sir, call him.

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[1] Old ed. "by."

[2] High shoes.

Enter GEORGE.

Geo. It needs not, sir, I am here already.

W.-Cam. Did you report this, George?

Geo. Yes, sir, I did.

W.-Cam. And wherefore did you so?

Geo. For a new suit that you promised me, sir, if I could bring home my mistress; and I think she's come, with a mischief.

Mis. W.-Cam. Give me that villain's ears!

Geo. I would give ear, if I could hear you talk wisely.

Mis. W.-Cam. Let me cut off his ears!

Geo. I shall hear worse of you hereafter then; limb for limb, one of my ears for one of your tongues, and I'll lay out for my master.

W.-Cam. 'Twas knavery with a good purpose in it:
Sweet Rachel, this was even George's meaning,
A second marriage 'twixt thyself and me;
And now I woo thee to't; a quiet night
Will make the sun, like a fresh bridegroom, rise
And kiss the chaste cheek of the rosy morn;
Which we will imitate, and, like him, create
Fresh buds of love, fresh-spreading arms, fresh fruit,
Fresh wedding-robes, and George's fresh new suit.

Mis. W.-Cam. This is fine stuff; have you much on't to sell?

Geo. A remnant of a yard.

W.-Cam. Come, come, all's well.—
Sir, you must sup, instead of to-morrow's dinner.

Kna. I follow you. [*Exeunt all except* KNAVESBY.]
—No, 'tis another way;
My lord's reward calls me to better cheer,
Many good meals, a hundred marks a-year:
My wife's transform'd a lady; tush, she'll come
To her shape again: my lord rides the circuit;
If I ride along with him, what need I grutch?[1]
I can as easy sit, and speed as much. [*Exit.*

[1] Grudge.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A Street.

Enter FRANKLIN *senior in mourning*, GEORGE CRESSINGHAM, *and* FRANKLIN *junior disguised as an old serving-man.*

G. Cres. Sir, your son's death, which has apparell'd you
In this darker wearing, is a loss wherein
I've ample share; he was my friend.
Frank. sen. He was my nearest
And dearest[1] enemy; and the perpetual
Fear of a worse end, had he continuèd
His former dissolute course[s], makes me weigh
His death the lighter.
G. Cres. Yet, sir, with your pardon,
If you value him every way as he deserv'd,
It will appear your scanting of his means,

[1] So Hamlet, "Would I had met my *dearest foe*," &c.—See Dyce's Shakespeare Glossary.

And the lord Beaufort's most unlordly breach
Of promise to him, made him fall upon
Some courses, to which his nature and mine own—
Made desperate likewise by the cruelty of
A mother-in-law—would else have been as strange
As insolent greatness is to distress'd virtue.

Frank. sen. Yes, I have heard of that too; your defeat
Made upon a mercer; I style't modestly,
The law intends it plain cozenage.

G. Cres. 'Twas no less;
But my penitence and restitution may
Come fairly off from't: it was no impeachment
To the glory won at Agincourt's great battle,
That the achiever of it in his youth
Had been a purse-taker; this with all reverence
To the great example. Now to my business,
Wherein you've made such noble trial of
Your worth, that in a world so dull as this,
Where faith is almost grown to be a miracle,
I've found a friend so worthy as yourself,
To purchase all the land my father sold
At the persuasion of a riotous woman,
And charitable, to reserve it for his use
And the good of his three children; this, I say,
Is such a deed shall style you our preserver,
And owe the memory of your worth, and pay it
To all posterity.

Frank. sen. Sir, what I've done
Looks to the end of the good deed itself,
No other way i' the world.

G. Cres. But would you please,
Out of a friendly reprehension,
To make him sensible of the weighty wrong
He has done his children? yet I would not have't
Too bitter, for he undergoes already
Such torment in a woman's naughty pride,
Too harsh reproof would kill him.

Frank. sen. Leave you that
To my discretion: I have made myself
My son's executor, and am come up
On purpose to collect his creditors;
And where I find his pennyworth conscionable,
I'll make them in part satisfaction.

Enter GEORGE.

O, this fellow was born near me, and his trading here i the city may bring me to the knowledge of the men my son ought[1] money to.

Geo. Your worship's welcome to London; and I pray, how does all our good friends i' the country?

Frank. sen. They are well, George: how thou art shot up since I saw thee! what, I think thou art almost out of thy time?

Geo. I am out of my wits, sir; I have lived in a kind of bedlam these four years; how can I be mine own man then?

Frank. sen. Why, what's the matter?

[1] Owed.

Geo. I may turn soap-boiler, I have a loose body: I am turned away from my master.

Frank. sen. How! turned away?

Geo. I am gone, sir, not in drink, and yet you may behold my indentures [*showing indenture*]. O the wicked wit of woman! for the good turn I did bringing her home, she ne'er left sucking my master's breath, like a cat, kissing him, I mean, till I was turned away.

Frank. sen. I have heard she's a terrible woman. 69

Geo. Yes, and the miserablest! her sparing in housekeeping has cost him somewhat—the Dagger-pies[1] can testify: she has stood in's light most miserably, like your fasting days before red letters in the almanac; saying the pinching of our bellies would be a mean to make him wear scarlet the sooner. She had once persuaded him to have bought spectacles for all his servants, that they might have worn 'em dinner and supper.

Frank. sen. To what purpose?

Geo. Marry, to have made our victuals seem bigger than 'twas: she shows from whence she came, that my wind-colic can witness. 81

Frank. sen. Why, whence came she?

Geo. Marry, from a courtier, and an officer too, that was up and down I know not how often.

Frank. sen. Had he any great place?

Geo. Yes, and a very high one, but he got little by it; he was one that blew the organ in the court chapel; our

[1] The Dagger was a tavern in Holborn. "Dagger-ale" is frequently mentioned; in the *Alchemist*, v. 2, there is a reference to "Dagger-furmety."

Puritans,[1] especially your Puritans in Scotland, could ne'er away with him.

Frank. sen. Is she one of the sect?

Geo. Faith, I think not, for I am certain she denies her husband the supremacy.

Frank. sen. Well, George, your difference may be reconciled. I am now to use your help in a business that concerns me; here's a note of men's names here i' the city unto whom my son ought[2] money, but I do not know their dwelling.

Geo. [*taking note from* FRANK. *sen.*] Let me see, sir: [*reads*] *Fifty pound ta'en up at use of Master Waterthin the brewer.*

Frank. sen. What's he?

Geo. An obstinate fellow, and one that denied payment of the groats till he lay by the heels for't; I know him: [*reads*] *Item, fourscore pair of provant*[3] *breeches, a' the new fashion, to Pinchbuttock, a hosier in Birchen Lane,*[4] so much.

Frank. sen. What the devil did he with so many pair of breeches?

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[1] "A pair of organs," says Sir Thomas Overbury in his character of *A Puritan*, "blow him out o' the parish, and are the only glister-pipes to cool him."

[2] Owed.

[3] "Provender, provision, ammunition; *provende*, French. . . . Thus *provant*, put in apposition with any other thing, implied that such an article was supplied for mere provision; as we say, ammunition bread, &c., meaning a common sort."—*Nares*.

[4] Here dwelt "the fripperers or upholders, that sold old apparel and household stuff" (Stow's *Survey of London*, ed. Thoms, p. 75).

Frank. jun. Supply a captain, sir; a friend of his went over to the Palatinate.

Geo. [*reads*] *Item, to my tailor, master Weatherwise, by St. Clement's church.*

G. Cres. Who should that be? it may be 'tis the new prophet, the astrological tailor.[1]

Frank. jun. No, no, no, sir, we have nothing to do with him.

Geo. Well, I'll read no further; leave the note to my discretion, do not fear but I'll inquire them all.

Frank. sen. Why, I thank thee, George.[2]—Sir, rest assured I shall in all your business be faithful to you, and at better leisure find time to imprint deeply in your father the wrong he has done you.

G. Cres. You are worthy in all things.—

[*Exeunt* FRANKLIN *senior*, FRANKLIN *junior*, *and* GEORGE.

(*Scene changes*[3] *to a room in* Sir F. CRESSINGHAM'S *House.*)

Enter SAUNDER.

Is my father stirring?

Saun. Yes, sir: my lady wonders you are thus chargeable to your father, and will not direct yourself unto

[1] The allusion is to a certain "prophet Ball," who is mentioned in Ben Jonson's *Staple of News*, iii. 1, and *Execration of Vulcan*. See note in Gifford's *Ben Jonson*, ed. 1875, v. 228.

[2] "George" is the prefix to "Sir, rest you," &c., in the old ed.

[3] This necessary stage-direction was inserted by Dyce.

some gainful study, may quit him of your dependance.

G. Cres. What study?

Saun. Why, the law; that law that takes up most a' the wits i' the kingdom, not for most good but most gain; or divinity, I have heard you talk well, and I do not think but you'd prove a singular fine churchman.

G. Cres. I should prove a plural better, if I could attain to fine benefices.

Saun. My lady, now she has money, is studying to do good works; she talked last night what a goodly act it was of a countess—Northamptonshire breed belike, or thereabouts—that to make Coventry a corporation, rode through the city naked, and by daylight.

G. Cres. I do not think but you have ladies living would discover as much in private, to advance but some member of a corporation.

Saun. Well, sir, your wit is still goring at my lady's projects: here's your father.

Enter Sir FRANCIS CRESSINGHAM.

Sir F. Cres. Thou comest to chide me, hearing how like a ward I am handled since the sale of my land.

G. Cres. No, sir, but to turn your eyes into your own bosom.

Sir F. Cres. Why, I am become my wife's pensioner; am confined to a hundred mark a-year, t' one suit, and one man to attend me.

Saun. And is not that enough for a private gentleman?

Sir F. Cres. Peace, sirrah, there is nothing but knave speaks in thee :—and my two poor children must be put forth to 'prentice!

G. Cres. Ha! to 'prentice?
Sir, I do not come to grieve you, but to show
How wretched your estate was, that you could not
Come to see order until foul disorder
Pointed the way to't;
So inconsiderate, yet so fruitful still
Is dotage to beget its own destruction.

Sir F. Cres. Surely I am nothing, and desire to be so.—
Pray thee, fellow, entreat her only to be quiet;
I have given her all my estate on that condition.

Saun. Yes, sir, her coffers are well lin'd, believe me.

Sir F. Cres. And yet she's not contented: we observe
The moon is ne'er so pleasant and so clear
As when she's at the full.

G. Cres. You did not use
My mother with this observance; you are like
The frogs, who, weary of their quiet king,
Consented to th' election of the stork,
Who in the end devour'd them.

Sir F. Cres. You may see
How apt man is to forfeit all his judgment
Upon the instant of his fall.

G. Cres. Look up, sir.

Sir F. Cres. O, my heart's broke! weighty are injuries

That come from an enemy, but those are deadly
That come from a friend, for we see commonly
Those are ta'en most to heart. She comes.

G. Cres. What a terrible eye she darts on us!

Enter LADY CRESSINGHAM.

Sir F. Cres. O, most natural for lightning to go before the thunder.

L. Cres. What! are you in council? are ye levying faction against us?

Sir F. Cres. Good friend——

L. Cres. Sir, sir, pray, come hither; there is winter in your looks, a latter winter; do you complain to your kindred? I'll make you fear extremely, to show you have any cause to fear.—Are the bonds sealed for the six thousand pounds I put forth to use?

Saun. Yes, madam.

L. Cres. The bonds were made in my uncle's name?

Saun. Yes.

L. Cres. 'Tis well.

Sir F. Cres. 'Tis strange though.

L. Cres. Nothing strange; you'll think the allowance I have put you to as strange, but your judgment cannot reach the aim I have in't: you were pricked last year to be high sheriff, and what it would have cost you I understand now; all this charge, and the other by the sale of your land, and the money at my dispose, and your pension so small, will settle you in quiet, make you master of a retired life; and our great ones may think

you a politic man, and that you are aiming at some strange business, having made all over.

Sir F. Cres. I must leave you: man is never truly awake till he be dead!

[*Exeunt* Sir F. CRESSINGHAM *and* SAUNDER.

G. Cres. What a dream have you made of my father!

L. Cres. Let him be so, and keep the proper place of dreams, his bed, until I raise him.

G. Cres. Raise him! not unlikely; 'tis you have ruined him.

L. Cres. You do not come to quarrel?

G. Cres. No, certain, but to persuade you to a thing, that, in the virtue of it, nobly carries its own commendation, and you shall gain much honour by it, which is the recompence of all virtuous actions,—to use my father kindly.

L. Cres. Why, does he complain to you, sir?

G. Cres. Complain? why should a king complain for anything, but for his sins to heaven? the prerogative of husband is like to his over his wife.

L. Cres. I'm full of business, sir, and will not mind you.

G. Cres. I must not leave you thus; I tell you, mother,

'Tis dangerous to a woman when her mind
Raises her to such height, it makes her only
Capable of her own merit, nothing of duty.
O, 'twas a strange, unfortunate o'erprizing
Your beauty, brought him, otherwise discreet,
Into the fatal neglect of his poor children!
What will you give us of the late sum you received?

L. Cres. Not a penny; away, you are troublesome and saucy.

G. Cres. You are too cruel: denials even from princes,
Who may do what they list, should be supplied
With a gracious verbal usage, that, though they do
Not cure the sore, they may abate the sense of't:
The wealth you seem to command over is his,
And he, I hope, will dispose of 't to our use.

L. Cres. When he can command my will.

G. Cres. Have you made him so miserable, that he must take a law from his wife?

L. Cres. Have you not had some lawyers forced to groan under the burden?

G. Cres. O, but the greater the women, the more visible are their vices!

L. Cres. So, sir,
You've been so bold: by all can bind an oath,
And I'll not break it, I'll not be the woman
To you hereafter you expected.

G. Cres. Be not;
Be not yourself, be not my father's wife,
Be not my lady Cressingham, and then
I'll thus speak to you, but you must not answer
In your own person.

L. Cres. A fine puppet-play!

G. Cres. Good madam, please you, pity the distress of a poor gentleman, that is undone by a cruel mother-in-law; you do not know her, nor does she deserve the knowledge of any good one, for she does not know her-

self; you would sigh for her that e'er she took you[r] sex, if you but heard her qualities.

L. Cres. This is a fine crotchet.

G. Cres. Envy and pride flow in her painted breasts, she gives no other suck; all her attendants do not belong to her husband; his money is hers, marry, his debts are his own: she bears such sway, she will not suffer his religion be his own, but what she please to turn it to.

L. Cres. And all this while I am the woman you libel against.

G. Cres. I remember, ere the land was sold, you talked of going to Ireland; but should you touch there, you would die presently.

L. Cres. Why, man?

G. Cres. The country brooks no poison:[1] go,
You'll find how difficult a thing it is
To make a settled or assur'd estate
Of things ill-gotten: when my father's dead,
The curse of lust and riot follow you!
Marry some young gallant that may rifle you;
Yet add one blessing to your needy age,
That you may die full of repentance.

L. Cres. Ha, ha, ha!

G. Cres. O, she is lost to any kind of goodness!

[*Exeunt severally.*

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[1] See note 1, vol. iv. p. 250.

SCENE II.

A Room.

Enter LORD BEAUFORT *and* KNAVESBY.

L. Beau. Sirrah, begone! you're base.
Kna. Base, my good lord?
'Tis a ground[1] part in music, trebles, means,
All is[2] but fiddling: your honour bore a part,
As my wife says, my lord.
L. Beau. Your wife's a strumpet!
Kna. Ah ha! is she so? I am glad to hear it;
Open confession, open payment;
The wager's mine then, a hundred a-year, my lord;
I said so before, and stak'd my head against it:
Thus after darksome night the day is come, my lord.
L. Beau. Hence, hide thy branded head; let no day see thee,
Nor thou any but thy execution-day.
Kna. That's the day after washing-day; once a-week
I see't at home, my lord.
L. Beau. Go home and see
Thy prostituted wife—for sure 'tis so—
Now folded in a boy's adultery,
My page, on whom the hot-rein'd harlot doats:
This night he hath been her attendant; my house
He is fled from, and must no more return:

[1] "An old musical term for an air or musical subject, on which variations and divisions were to be made."—*Nares.*
[2] Old ed. "his but sidling."

Go, and make haste, sir, lest your reward be lost
For want of looking to.

Kna. My reward lost?

Is there nothing due for what is past, my lord?

L. Beau. Yes, pander, wittol,[1] macrio,[2] basest of knaves,
Thou bolster-bawd to thine own infamy!
Go, I've no more about me at this time;
When I am better stor'd thou shalt have more,
Where'er I meet thee.

Kna. Pander, wittol, macrio, base knave, bolster-bawd! here is but five mark toward a hundred a-year; this is poor payment. If lords may be trusted no better than thus, I will go home and cut my wife's nose off; I will turn over a new leaf, and hang up the page; lastly, I will put on a large pair of wet-leather boots, and drown myself; I will sink at Queen-hive,[3] and rise again at Charing Cross, contrary to the statute in *Edwardo primo.* [*Exit.*

Enter FRANKLIN *senior*, FRANKLIN *junior disguised as before*, GEORGE, *and several Creditors.*

Frank. sen. Good health to your lordship!

L. Beau. Master Franklin, I heard of your arrival, and the cause of this your sad appearance.

Frank. sen. And 'tis no more than as your honour says, indeed, appearance; it has more form than feeling

[1] Tame cuckold. [2] Pander.

[3] Queenhithe.—The allusion is to the well-known legend that Elinor, wife of Edward I., sank into the earth at Charing Cross and rose from the Thames at Queenhithe.

sorrow, sir, I must confess: there's none of these gentlemen, though aliens in blood, but have as large cause of grief as I.

First C. No, by your favour, sir, we are well satisfied; there was in his life a greater hope, but less assurance.

Sec. C. Sir, I wish all my debts of no better promise to pay me thus; fifty in the hundred comes fairly homewards.

Frank. jun. Considering hard bargains, and dead commodities, sir.

Sec. C. Thou say'st true, friend—and from a dead debtor, too.

L. Beau. And so you have compounded and agreed all your son's riotous debts?

Frank. sen. There's behind but one cause of worse condition; that done, he may sleep quietly.

First C. Yes, sure, my lord, this gentleman is come a wonder to us all, that so fairly, with half a loss, could satisfy those debts were dead, even with his son, and from whom we could have nothing claimed.

Frank. sen. I showed my reason; I would have a good name live after him, because he bore my name.

Sec. C. May his tongue perish first—and that will spoil his trade—that first gives him a syllable of ill!

L. Beau. Why, this is friendly.

Enter WATER-CAMLET.

W.-Cam. My lord!

L. Beau. Master Camlet! very welcome

W.-Cam. Master Franklin, I take it: these gentlemen

I know well, good master Pennystone, master Philip,[1] master Cheyney: I am glad I shall take my leave of so many of my good friends at once. Your hand first, my lord—fare you well, sir—nay, I must have all your hands to my pass. [*Taking their hands.* 72

Geo. Will you have mine too, sir?

W.-Cam. Yes, thy two hands, George, and, I think, two honest hands of a tradesman, George, as any between Cornhill and Lombard Street.

Geo. Take heed what you say, sir, there's Birchin Lane between 'em.

L. Beau. But what's the cause of this, master Camlet?

W.-Cam. I have the cause in handling now, my lord; George, honest George, is the cause, yet no cause of George's; George is turned away one way, and I must go another. 83

L. Beau. And whither is your way, sir?

W.-Cam. E'en to seek out a quiet life, my lord: I do hear of a fine peaceable island.

L. Beau. Why, 'tis the same you live in.

W.-Cam. No; 'tis so fam'd,
But we th' inhabitants find it not so:
The place I speak of[2] has been kept with thunder,
With frightful lightnings, amazing noises; 90

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1 "Master Philip, master Cheyney."—There was a fashionable material called Philip-and-Cheyney. See Dyce's Beaumont and Fletcher, iv. 26.

2 The Bermudas, which were supposed to be infested with devils and vexed with storms. See Malone's Essay on the Origin of *The Tempest* (and the accompanying Appendix), in vol. xv. of the 1821 Variorum Shakespeare.

But now, th' enchantment broke, 'tis the land of peace,
Where hogs and tobacco yield fair increase.

L. Beau. This is a little wild, methinks.

W.-Cam. Gentlemen, fare you well, I am for the Bermudas.

L. Beau. Nay, good sir, stay: and is that your only cause, the loss of George?

W.-Cam. The loss of George, my lord? make you that no cause? why, but examine, would it not break the stout heart of a nobleman to lose his george,[1] much more the tender bosom of a citizen? 101

L. Beau. Fie, fie, I'm sorry your gravity should run back to lightness thus: you go to the Bermothes![2]

Frank. sen. Better to Ireland, sir.

W.-Cam. The land of Ire? that's too near home; my wife will be heard from Hellbree to Divelin.[3]

Frank. sen. Sir, I must of necessity a while detain you: I must acquaint you with a benefit that's coming towards you; you were cheated of some goods of late—come, I'm a cunning man, and will help you to the most part again, or some reasonable satisfaction. 111

W.-Cam. That's another cause of my unquiet life, sir; can you do that, I may chance stay another tide or two.

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[1] The insignia of the order of St. George.

[2] "Or *Bermoothes*—an old form of *Bermudas*."—*Dyce*. Dyce should have reminded the reader that *Bermudas* was the name of a disreputable cluster of alleys (the resort of thieves and drabs and fraudulent creditors) in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden. See Gifford's *Ben Jonson*, ed. 1875, iv. 407, v. 81.

[3] Dublin.

Enter MISTRESS WATER-CAMLET.

My wife! I must speak more private with you—by forty foot, pain of death, I dare not reach her! no words of me, sweet gentlemen. [*Slips behind the arras.*

Geo. I had need hide too. [*Follows* W.-CAMLET.

Mis. W.-Cam. O, my lord, I have scarce tongue enough yet to tell you—my husband, my husband's gone from me! your warrant, good my lord! I never had such need of your warrant; my husband's gone from me!

L. Beau. Going he is, 'tis true, has ta'en his leave of me and all these gentlemen, and 'tis your sharp tongue that whips him forwards.

Mis. W.-Cam. A warrant, good my lord!

L. Beau. You turn away his servants, such on whom his estate depends, he says, who know his books, his debts, his customers: the form and order of all his affairs you make orderless—chiefly, his George you have banished from him.

Mis. W.-Cam. My lord, I will call George again.

Geo. [*behind the arras.*] Call George again!

L. Beau. Why, hark you, how high-voiced you are, that raise an echo from my cellarage, which we with modest loudness cannot!

Mis. W.-Cam. My lord, do you think I speak too loud?

Geo. [*behind the arras.*] Too loud!

L. Beau. Why, hark, your own tongue answers you, and reverberates your words into your teeth!

Mis. W.-Cam. I will speak lower all the days of my

life; I never found the fault in myself till now: your warrant, good my lord, to stay my husband!

L. Beau. Well, well, it shall o'ertake him ere he pass Gravesend, provided that he meet his quietness at home, else he's gone again.

Frank. sen. And withal to call George again.

Mis. W.-Cam. I will call George again.

Geo. [*behind the arras.*] Call George again!

L. Beau. See, you are rais'd again, the echo tells you!

Mis. W.-Cam. I did forget myself indeed, my lord: this is my last fault: I will go make a silent inquiry after George, I will whisper half a score porters in the ear, that shall run softly up and down the city to seek him. Be wi' ye, my lord—bye all, gentlemen. [*Exit.*

L. Beau. George, your way lies before you now [George *comes from behind the arras*]; cross the street, and come into her eyes; your master's journey will be stayed.

Geo. I'll warrant you bring it to better subjection yet. [*Exit.*

L. Beau. These are fine flashes! [WATER-CAMLET *comes from behind the arras.*]—How now, master Camlet?

W.-Cam. I had one ear lent to youward, my lord,
And this o' th' other[1] side; both sounded sweetly:
I've whole recover'd my late losses, sir;
The one half paid, the other[2] is forgiven.

L. Beau. Then your journey is stayed?

W.-Cam. Alas, my lord, that was a trick of age!

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[1] Old ed. "oth to'ther." [2] Old ed. "to'ther."

For I had left never a trick of youth
Like it, to succour me.

Enter SWEETBALL *with* KNAVESBY.

L. Beau. How now? what new object's here?

Sweet. The next man we meet shall judge us.

Kna. Content, though he be but a common councilman.

L. Beau. The one's a knave, I could know him at twelve score distance.

Frank. sen. And t'other's a barber-surgeon, my lord.

Kna. I'll go no further; here is the honourable lord that I know will grant my request. My lord—

Sweet. Peace; I will make it plain to his lordship. My lord, a covenant by *jus jurandum* is between us; he is to suffocate my respiration by his *capistrum*, and I to make incision so far as mortification by his jugulars.

L. Beau. This is not altogether so plain neither, sir.

Sweet. I can speak no plainer, my lord, unless I wrong mine art.

Kna. I can, my lord, I know some part of the law: I am to take him in this place where I find him, and lead him from hence to the place of execution, and there to hang him till he dies; he in equal courtesy is to cut my throat with his razor, and there's an end of both on's.

Sweet. There is the end, my lord, but we want the beginning: I stand upon it to be strangled first, before I touch either his *gula* or *cervix*.

Kna. I am against it, for how shall I be sure to have my throat cut after he's hanged?

L. Beau. Is this a condition betwixt you?

Kna. A firm covenant, signed and sealed by oath and handfast, and wants nothing but agreement.

L. Beau. A little pause: what might be the cause on either part?

Sweet. My passions are grown to putrefaction, and my griefs are gangrened; master Camlet has scarified me all over, besides the loss of my new brush. 202

Kna. I am kept out of mine own castle, my wife keeps the hold against me; your page, my lord, is her champion: I summoned a parle at the window, was answered with defiance: they confess they have lain together, but what they have done else, I know not.

L. Beau. Thou canst have no wrong that deserves pity, thou art thyself so bad.

Kna. I thank your honour for that; let me have my throat cut then. 211

W.-Cam. Sir, I can give you a better remedy than his *capistrum*;—your ear a little.

Enter MISTRESS KNAVESBY, *and* MISTRESS GEORGE CRESSINGHAM *in female attire.*

Mis. Kna. I come with a bold innocence to answer
The best and worst that can accuse me here.

L. Beau. Your husband.

Mis. Kna. He's the worst, I dare his worst.

Kna. Your page, your page.

Mis. Kna. We lay together in bed,

It is confess'd; you and your ends of law
Make[1] worser of't, I did it for reward.

L. Beau. I'll hear no more of this.—Come, gentlemen,
will you walk?

Enter GEORGE CRESSINGHAM.

G. Cres. My lord, a little stay; you'll see a sight
That neighbour amity will be much pleas'd with:
It is already come;[2] my father, sir.

Enter Sir FRANCIS CRESSINGHAM *in rich apparel.*

L. Beau. There must be cause, certain, for this good
change.—
Sir, you are bravely[3] met;
This is the[4] best I ever saw you at.

Sir F. Cres. My lord, I am amazement to myself:
I slept in poverty, and am awake
Into this wonder: how I came[5] thus brave,
My dreams did not so much as tell me of;
I am of my kind son's new making up;
It exceeds the pension much that yesternight
Allow'd me, and my pockets centupled;
But I'm my son's child, sir, he knows of me
More than I do myself.

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[1] Old ed. "makes."
[2] Old ed. "come already."
[3] In handsome attire.
[4] "The best," &c. Old ed. "at the best I ever saw you."
[5] Old ed. "can."

G. Cres. Sir, you yet have
But earnest of your happiness, a pinnace
Fore-riding a goodly vessel, by this near anchor,
Bulk'd like a castle, and with jewels fraught—
Joys above jewels, sir—from deck to keel:
Make way for the receipt; empty your bosom
Of all griefs and troubles; leave not a sigh
To beat her back again; she is so stor'd,
Y'had need have room enough to take her lading.
Sir F. Cres. If one commodity be wanting now
All this is nothing.
G. Cres. Tush, that must out too:
There must be no remembrance, not the thought
That ever youth in woman did abuse you,
That e'er your children had a stepmother,
That you sold lands to please your punishment,
That you were circumscrib'd and taken in,
Abridg'd the large extendure of your grounds,
And put into the pin-fold that belong'd to't,
That your son did cheat for want of maintenance;
That he did beg you shall remember only,
For I have begg'd off all these troubles from you.
L. Beau. This was a good week's labour.
G. Cres. Not an hour's, my lord, but 'twas a happy one.—
See, sir, a new day shines on you.

Enter LADY CRESSINGHAM *in civil habit*, MARIA *and* EDWARD *very gallant, and* SAUNDER.

L. Cres. O sir,
Your son has robb'd me——

Sir F. Cres. Ha, that way I instructed?

G. Cres. Nay, hear her, sir.

L. Cres. Of my good purpose, sir;
He hath forc'd out of me what lay conceal'd,
Ripen'd my pity with his dews of duty:
Forgive me, sir, and but keep the number
Of every grief that I have pain'd you with,
I'll tenfold pay with fresh obedience.

W.-Cam. O that my wife were here to learn this lesson!

L. Cres. Your state is not abated, what was yours is still your own; and take the cause withal of my harsh-seeming usage,—it was to reclaim faults in yourself, the swift consumption of many large revenues, gaming; that of not much less speed, burning up house and land, not casual, but cunning fire, which, though it keeps the chimney, and outward shows like hospitality, is only devourer on't, consuming chemistry,—there I have made you a flat banquerout,[1] all your stillatories and labouring minerals are demolished—that part of hell in your house is extinct;
Put out your desire with them, and then these feet
Shall level with my hands until you raise
My stoop'd humility to higher grace,
To warm these lips with love, and duty do
To every silver hair, each one shall be
A senator to my obedience.

[1] Bankrupt.

Sir F. Cres. All this I knew[1] before: whoe'er of you
That had but one ill thought of this good woman,
You owe a knee to her, and she is merciful
If she forgive you.

Re-enter GEORGE *and* MISTRESS WATER-CAMLET.

L. Beau. That shall be private penance, sir; we'll all joy in public with you.

Geo. On the conditions I tell you, not else.

Mis. W.-Cam. Sweet George, dear George, any conditions.

W.-Cam. My wife!

Frank. sen. Peace; George is bringing her to conditions.

W.-Cam. Good ones, good George!

Geo. You shall never talk your voice above the key sol, sol, sol.

Mis. W.-Cam. Sol, sol, sol,—ay, George.

Geo. Say, Welcome home, honest George, in that pitch.

Mis. W.-Cam. Welcome home, honest George!

Geo. Why, this is well now.

W.-Cam. That's well indeed, George.

Geo. *Rogue* nor *rascal* must never come out of your mouth.

Mis. W.-Cam. They shall never come in, honest George.

Geo. Nor I will not have you call my master plain

[1] Old ed. "know."

husband, that's too coarse; but as your gentlewomen in the country use, and your parsons' wives in the town,—'tis comely, and shall be customed in the city,—call him *master* Camlet at every word.

Mis. W.-Cam. At every word, honest George.

Geo. Look you, there he is, salute him then.

Mis. W.-Cam. Welcome home, good master Camlet!

W.-Cam. Thanks, and a thousand,[1] sweet—*wife*, I may say, honest George?

Geo. Yes, sir, or *bird*, or *chuck*, or *heart's-ease*, or plain *Rachel;* but call her *Rac* no more, so long as she is quiet.

W.-Cam. God-a-mercy, sha't have thy new suit a' Sunday, George.

Mis. W.-Cam. George shall have two new suits, master Camlet.

W.-Cam. God-a-mercy, i'faith, chuck.

Sweet. Master Camlet, you and I are friends, all even betwixt us?

W.-Cam. I do acquit thee, neighbour Sweetball.

Sweet. I will not be hanged then.—Knavesby, do thy worst; nor I will not cut thy throat.

Kna. I must do't myself.

Sweet. If thou comest to my shop, and usurpest my chair of maintenance, I will go as near as I can, but I will not do't.

G. Cres. No, 'tis I must cut Knavesby's throat, for slandering a modest gentlewoman and my wife, in shape

---

[1] "Thanks, and a thousand" = a thousand thanks.

of your page, my lord; in her own I durst not place her so near your lordship.

L. Beau. No more of that, sir; if your ends have acquired their own events, crown 'em with your own joy.

G. Cres. Down a' your knees, Knavesby, to your wife; she's too honest for you.

Sweet. Down, down, before you are hanged, 'twill be too late afterwards; and long thou canst not 'scape it.

[KNAVESBY *kneels.*

Mis. Kna. You'll play the pander no more, will you?

Kna. O, that's an inch into my throat!

Mis. Kna. And let out your wife for hire?[1]

Kna. O, sweet wife, go no deeper.

Mis. Kna. Dare any be bail for your better behaviour?

L. Beau. Yes, yes, I dare; he will mend one day.

Mis. Kna. And be worse the next.

Kna. Hang me the third then; dear, merciful wife, I will do anything for a quiet life. [*Rises.*

L. Beau. All then is reconciled.

Sweet. Only my brush is lost, my dear new brush.

Frank. sen. I will help you to satisfaction for that too, sir.

Sweet. O spermaceti! I feel it heal already.

Frank. sen. Gentlemen, I have fully satisfied my dead son's debts?

Creditors. All pleased, all paid, sir.

---

[1] Old ed. "her."

Frank. sen. Then once more here I bring him back to life,
From my servant to my son: nay, wonder not,
I have not dealt by fallacy with any:
My son was dead; whoe'er outlives his virtues
Is a dead man; for when you hear of spirits
That walk in real bodies, to th' amaze
And cold astonishment of such as meet 'em,
And all would shun, those are men of vices,
Who nothing have but what is visible,
And so, by consequence, they have no souls;
But if the soul return, he lives again,
Created newly; such my son appears,
By my blessing rooted, growing by his tears.

Creditors. You have beguiled us honestly, sir.

Frank. jun. And you shall have your brush again.

Sweet. My basins shall all ring for joy.

L. Beau. Why, this deserves a triumph,[1] and my cost
Shall begin a feast to it, to which I do
Invite you all; such happy reconcilements
Must not be past without a health of joy:
Discorded friends aton'd,[2] men and their wives,
This hope proclaims your after quiet lives.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

[1] A public show. [2] Reconciled.

EPILOGUE.

I am sent t' inquire your censure,[1] and to know
How you stand affected? whether we do owe
Our service to your favours, or must strike
Our sails, though full of hope, to your dislike?
Howe'er, be pleas'd to think we purpos'd well,
And from my fellows thus much I must tell:
Instruct us but in what we went astray,
And, to redeem it, we'll take any way.

[1] Judgment.

THE WITCH.

A Tragi-Coomodie, Called the Witch; long since acted by His Maties Seruants at the Black-Friers. Written by Tho. Middleton.

The MS. of *The Witch* is a small quarto of forty-eight leaves, very neatly written. The dedication is in the same handwriting as the play. I judge that the handwriting is not Middleton's, but a copyist's; for, though the play is unusually free from serious corruptions, we occasionally find errors that appear to be a copyist's misreadings of the author's manuscript rather than slips of the pen—*e.g.*, p. 368 "Dentaphillon" for "Pentaphyllon," p. 372 "Silence" for "Sylvans."

From a note on the fly-leaf we learn that the MS. belonged to the actor Benjamin Griffin (*b.* 1680, *d.* 1740) and afterwards to Lockyer Davis, a bookseller, who sold it to Major Pearson. At the Major's auction Steevens purchased it for £2, 14*s.* In 1778 one hundred copies of it were printed for private circulation by Isaac Reed. At the sale of Steevens' books, on 20th May 1800, it was purchased by Malone "at the enormous price of £7, 10*s.*;" and in 1821 it passed with Malone's other MSS. to its resting-place in the Bodleian Library.

"Some of the incidents in *The Witch* were suggested by the following passage of Machiavel's *Florentine History*. 'Their [the Lombards'] kingdom descending upon Alboinus a bold and warlike man, they passed the Danube, and encountering Comundus King of the Lepides then possessed of Pannonia, overthrew and slew him. Amongst the captives Alboinus finds Rosamund the daughter of Comundus, and taking her to wife becomes Lord of Pannonia; but out of a brutish fierceness in his nature, he makes a drinking cup of Comundus's skull, and out of it used to carouse in memory of that victory. Invited now by Narsetes, with whom he had been in league during the Gothick war, he leaves Pannonia to the Huns, who, as we have said, were after the death of Attila

returned into their own Countrey, and comes into Italy, which finding so strangely divided, he in an instant possesses himself of Pavia, Milan, Verona, Vicenza, all Tuscany, and the greatest part of Flaminia, at this day called Romania. So that by these great and sudden victories judging himself already Conquerour of Italy, he makes a solemn feast at Verona, and in the heat of wine growing merry, causes Comundus's skull to be filled full of wine, and would needs have it presented to Queen Rosamund, who sate at table over against him, telling her so loud that all might hear, that in such a time of mirth he would have her drink with her father; those words were as so many darts in the poor ladies bosome, and consulting with revenge, she bethought her self, how Almachildis a noble Lombard, young and valiant, courted one of the Ladies of her bed-chamber; with her she contrives that she should promise Almachildis the kindness of admitting him by night to her chamber; and Almachildis according to her assignation being received into a dark room, lyes with the Queen, whilest he thought he lay with the Lady, who after the fact discovers herself, offering to his choice either the killing of Alboinus and enjoying her and the Crown, or the being made his sacrifice for defiling his bed. Almachildis consents to kill Alboinus; but they seeing afterwards their designs of seizing the kingdom prove unsuccessful, nay rather fearing to be put to death by the Lombards (such love bore they to Alboinus) they fled with all the Royal Treasure to Longinus at Ravenna,' &c. *English translation*, 1674, pp. 17, 18.

"See also *Histoires Tragiques* de Belleforest, 1616, t. iv. Hist., lxxiii."—*Dyce.*

TO THE

TRULY WORTHY AND GENEROUSLY AFFECTED

THOMAS HOLMES, ESQUIRE.

NOBLE SIR,

As a true testimony of my ready inclination to your service, I have, merely upon a taste of your desire, recovered[1] into my hands, though not without much difficulty, this ignorantly ill-fated labour of mine.

Witches are, *ipso facto*, by the law condemned, and that only, I think, hath made her lie so long in an imprisoned obscurity. For your sake alone she hath thus far conjured herself abroad, and bears no other charms about her but what may tend to your recreation, nor no other spell but to possess you with a belief, that as she, so he that first taught her to enchant, will always be

Your devoted

THO. MIDDLETON.

---

[1] *i.e.* from the King's Company at the Blackfriars Theatre.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Duke.
Lord Governor of Ravenna.
SEBASTIAN, *contracted to Isabella.*
FERNANDO, *his friend.*
ANTONIO, *husband to Isabella.*
ABERZANES, *a gentleman, neither honest, wise, nor valiant.*
ALMACHILDES, *a fantastical gentleman.*
GASPARO, HERMIO, } *servants to Antonio.*
FIRESTONE, *the clown and Hecate's son.*
Servants, &c.

Duchess.
ISABELLA, *wife to Antonio, and niece to the governor.*
FRANCISCA, *sister to Antonio.*
AMORETTA, *the duchess's woman.*
FLORIDA, *a courtesan.*
HECATE, *the chief witch.*
STADLIN, HOPPO, } *witches.*
Other witches, &c.

Scene, RAVENNA and its neighbourhood.

35-7

THE WITCH.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the house of the Lord Governor: *a banquet set out.*

Enter SEBASTIAN *and* FERNANDO.

Seb. My three years spent in war has now undone
My peace for ever.
Fer. Good, be patient, sir.
Seb. She is my wife by contract before heaven
And all the angels, sir.
Fer. I do believe you;
But where's the remedy now? you see she's gone,
Another has possession.
Seb. There's the torment!
Fer. This day, being the first of your return,
Unluckily proves the first too of her fastening.
Her uncle, sir, the governor of Ravenna,

Holding a good opinion of the bridegroom,
As he's fair spoken, sir, and wondrous mild——
Seb. There goes the devil in a sheep-skin!
Fer. With all speed
Clapp'd it up suddenly: I cannot think, sure,
That the maid over-loves him; though being married,
Perhaps, for her own credit, now she intends
Performance of an honest, duteous wife.
Seb. Sir, I've a world of business: question nothing;
You will but lose your labour; 'tis not fit
For any, hardly mine own secrecy,
To know what I intend. I take my leave, sir.
I find such strange employments in myself,
That unless death pity me and lay me down,
I shall not sleep these seven years; that's the least, sir.
[*Exit.*
Fer. That sorrow's dangerous can abide no counsel;
'Tis like a wound past cure: wrongs done to love
Strike the heart deeply; none can truly judge on't
But the poor sensible sufferer whom it racks
With unbelieved pains, which men in health,
That enjoy love, not possibly can act,
Nay, not so much as think. In troth, I pity him:
His sighs drink life-blood in this time of feasting.
A banquet towards too! not yet hath riot
Play'd out her last scene? at such entertainments still
Forgetfulness obeys, and surfeit governs:
Here's marriage sweetly honour'd in gorg'd stomachs
And overflowing cups!

Enter GASPARO *and* Servant.

Gas. Where is she, sirrah?
Ser. Not far off.
Gas. Prithee, where? go fetch her hither:
I'll rid him away straight.— [*Exit Servant.*
The duke's[1] now risen, sir.
Fer. I am a joyful man to hear it, sir,
It seems h'as drunk the less; though I think he
That has the least has certainly enough. [*Exit.*
Gas. I have observ'd this fellow: all the feast-time
He hath not pledg'd one cup, but look'd most wickedly
Upon good Malaga; flies to the black-jack[2] still,
And sticks to small drink like a water-rat.
O, here she comes:

Enter FLORIDA.

Alas, the poor whore weeps!
'Tis not for grace now, all the world must judge;
It is for spleen and madness 'gainst this marriage:
I do but think how she could beat the vicar now,
Scratch the man horribly that gave the woman,
The woman worst of all if she durst do it. [*Aside.*
Why, how now, mistress? this weeping needs not; for though
My master marry for his reputation,
He means to keep you too.

[1] MS. "king's."
[2] A leather can for holding beer.

Flo. How, sir?
Gas. He doth indeed;
He swore 't to me last night. Are you so simple,
And have been five years traded, as to think
One woman would serve him? fie, not an empress!
Why, he'll be sick o' th' wife within ten nights,
Or never trust my judgment.
Flo. Will he, think'st thou?
Gas. Will he!
Flo. I find thee still so comfortable,
Beshrew my heart, if I know[1] how to miss thee:
They talk of gentlemen, perfumers, and such things;
Give me the kindness of the master's man
In my distress, say I.
Gas. 'Tis your great love, forsooth.
Please you withdraw yourself to yond private parlour;
I'll send you vension, custard, parsnip-pie;
For banqueting stuff, as suckets,[2] jellies, sirups,
I will bring in myself.
Flo. I'll take 'em kindly, sir. [*Exit.*
Gas. Sh'as your grand strumpet's complement to a tittle.
'Tis a fair building: it had need; it has
Just at this time some one and twenty inmates;
But half of 'em are young merchants, they'll depart shortly;
They take but rooms for summer, and away they
When 't grows foul weather: marry, then come the termers,[3]

[1] MS. "knew."
[2] Sweetmeats.
[3] Dissolute persons who frequented the metropolis in term-time. Cf. vol. iii. p. 7.

And commonly they're well-booted for all seasons.
But peace, no word; the guests are coming in.
[*Retires.*

Enter ALMACHILDES *and* AMORETTA.

Alm. The fates have bless'd me; have I met you privately?
Am. Why, sir, why, Almachildes!——
Alm. Not a kiss?
Am. I'll call aloud, i'faith.
Alm. I'll stop your mouth.
Am. Upon my love to reputation,
I'll tell the duchess once more.
Alm. 'Tis the way
To make her laugh a little.
Am. She'll not think
That you dare use a maid of honour thus.
Alm. Amsterdam [1] swallow thee for a puritan,
And Geneva cast thee up again! like she that sunk [2]
At Charing Cross, and rose again at Queenhithe!
Am. Ay, these are the silly fruits of the sweet vine, sir. [*Retires.*
Alm. Sweet venery be with thee, and I at the tail
Of my wish! I am a little headstrong, and so
Are most of the company. I will to the witches.
They say they have charms and tricks to make
A wench fall backwards, and lead a man herself

[1] See note 1, vol. ii. p. 96. [2] See note 3, p. 334.

To a country-house, some mile out of the town,
Like a fire-drake. There be such whoreson kind girls
And such bawdy witches; and I'll try conclusions.

Enter Duke, Duchess, Lord Governor, ANTONIO, ISABELLA, *and* FRANCISCA.

Duke. A banquet yet! why surely, my lord governor,
Bacchus could ne'er boast of a day till now,
To spread his power, and make his glory known.
Duch. Sir, you've done nobly; though in modesty
You keep it from us, know, we understand so much,
All this day's cost 'tis your great love bestows,
In honour of the bride, your virtuous niece.
Gov. In love to goodness and your presence, madam;
So understood, 'tis rightly.
Duke. Now will I
Have a strange health after all these.
Gov. What's that, my lord?
Duke. A health in a strange cup; and 't shall go round.
Gov. Your grace need not doubt that, sir, having seen
So many pledg'd already: this fair company
Cannot shrink now for one, so it end there.
Duke. It shall, for all ends here: here's a full period.
[*Produces a skull set as a cup.*
Gov. A skull, my lord?
Duke. Call it a soldier's cup, man:
Fie, how you fright the women! I have sworn

It shall go round, excepting only you, sir,
For your late sickness, and the bride herself,
Whose health it is.
Isa. Marry, I thank heaven for that!
Duke. Our duchess, I know, will pledge us, though the cup
Was once her father's head, which, as a trophy,
We'll keep till death in memory of that conquest.
He was the greatest foe our steel e'er strook at,
And he was bravely slain: then took we thee
Into our bosom's love: thou mad'st the peace
For all thy country, thou, that beauty, did.
We're dearer than a father, are we not?
Duch. Yes, sir, by much.
Duke. And we shall find that straight.
Ant. That's an ill bride-cup for a marriage-day,
I do not like the face on't.
Gov. Good my lord,
The duchess looks pale: let her not pledge you there.
Duke. Pale?
Duch. Sir, not I.
Duke. See how your lordship fails now;
The rose not fresher, nor the sun at rising
More comfortably pleasing.
Duch. Sir, to you,
The lord of this day's honour. [*Drinks.*
Ant. All first moving
From your grace, madam, and the duke's great favour,
Since it must. [*Drinks.*

Fran. This the worst fright that could come
To a conceal'd great belly! I'm with child;
And this will bring it out, or make me come
Some seven weeks sooner than we maidens reckon.
[*Aside.*

Duch. Did ever cruel barbarous art match this?
Twice hath his surfeits brought my father's memory
Thus spitefully and scornfully to mine eyes;
And I'll endure 't no more; 'tis in my heart since:
I'll be reveng'd as far as death can lead me.[1] [*Aside.*

Alm. Am I the last man, then? I may deserve
To be first one day. [*Drinks.*

Gov. Sir, it has gone round now.

Duke. The round?[2] an excellent way to train up soldiers!
Where's bride and bridegroom?

Ant. At your happy service.

Duke. A boy to-night at least; I charge you look to't,
Or I'll renounce you for industrious subjects.

Ant. Your grace speaks like a worthy and tried soldier.

Gas. And you'll do well for one that ne'er toss'd pike, sir. [*Exeunt.*

---

[1] Reed and Dyce give "one," but the reading of the MS. is plainly "me."

[2] See note 3, vol. iii. p. 99.

SCENE II.

The abode of HECATE.

Enter HECATE.[1]

Hec. Titty and Tiffin, Suckin and Pidgen, Liard and Robin! white spirits, black spirits, grey spirits, red spirits! devil-toad, devil-ram, devil-cat, and devil-dam! why, Hoppo[2] and Stadlin, Hellwain[3] and Puckle![4]

Stad. [*within*] Here, sweating at the vessel.

Hec. Boil it well.

Hop. [*within*] It gallops now.

Hec. Are the flames blue enough?
Or shall I use a little seething more?

Stad. [*within*] The nips of fairies[5] upon maids' white hips
Are not more perfect azure.

---

[1] The stage direction in the MS. is:—"*Enter Heccat; and other Witches (with Properties, and Habitts fitting).*"

[2] The names of these spirits are borrowed from Reginald Scot. See the quotations on pp. 372, 373.

[3] MS. "Hellwin." [4] MS. "Prickle."

[5] It was one of the commonest of superstitions that elves pinched sluttish maids. Cf. *Merry Wives of Windsor*, v. 5—

> "Where fires thou find'st unraked and hearths unswept,
> There pinch the maids as blue as bilberry."

So Herrick in a charming little poem—

> "If ye will with Mab find grace,
> Set each platter in his place;

Hec. Tend it carefully.
Send Stadlin to me with a brazen dish,
That I may fall to work upon these serpents,
And squeeze 'em ready for the second hour:
Why, when?[1]

Enter STADLIN *with a dish.*

Stad. Here's Stadlin and the dish.
Hec. There, take this unbaptized brat;[2]
[*Giving the dead body of a child.*

Rake the fire up, and get
Water in ere sun be set.
Wash your pails and cleanse your dairies;
Sluts are loathsome to the fairies.
Sweep your house: who doth not so,
Mab will pinch her by the toe."

[1] An exclamation of impatience.

[2] "Here, and in the next three speeches of Hecate, Middleton follows Reginald Scot, using sometimes the very words of that curious writer. In the *Discouerie of Witchcraft*, Scot gives from 'John Bapt. Neap,' *i.e.* Porta, the following receipts for the miraculous transportation of witches: '℞. *The fat of yoong children, and seeth it with water in a brasen vessell*, reseruing the thickest of that which remaineth boiled in the bottome, which they laie vp and keepe, vntill occasion serueth to vse it. *They put herevnto Eleoselinum, Aconitum, frondes populeas, and soote.*' '℞. *Sium, acarum vulgare, pentaphyllon, the bloud of a flitter-mouse, solanum somniferum et oleum.* They stampe all these togither, and then they rubbe all parts of their bodies exceedinglie, till they looke red and be verie hot, so as the pores may be opened and their flesh soluble and loose. They ioine herewithall either fat or oile in steed thereof, that the force of the ointment maie the rather pearse inwardly, and so be more effectual. By this means (saith he) *in a moone light night they seeme to be carried in the aire, to feasting, singing, dansing, kissing, culling, and other acts of venerie, with such youthes as they loue and desire most*,' &c. B. x. c. viii. p. 184, ed. 1584. —See the original of this in Porta's *Magiæ Naturalis, sive De Mira-*

Boil it well; preserve the fat:
You know 'tis precious to transfer
Our 'nointed flesh into the air,
In moonlight nights, on steeple-tops,
Mountains, and pine-trees, that like pricks or stops
Seem to our height; high towers and roofs of princes
Like wrinkles in the earth; whole provinces

---

culis Rerum Naturalium Libri iiii., 1561, 12mo, p. 180. Porta omitted the passage in (at least some) later and enlarged editions of his work."—*Dyce.* At the trial of the Lancashire witches in 1612, Grace Sowerbutts, a girl of 14, deposed that Janet Bierly caused the death of a child by thrusting a nail into its navel, and "the next night after the burial thereof, the said Janet Bierly and Ellen Bierly, taking this examinate with them, went to Salmesbury Church and there did take up the said child, and the said Janet did carry it out of the churchyard in her arms, and then did put it in her lap and carried it home to her own house, and having it there did boil some thereof in a pot, and some did broil on the coals, of both which the said Janet and Ellen did eat and would have had this examinate, and one Grace Bierly, daughter of the said Ellen, to have eaten with them, but they refused so to do. And afterwards the said Janet and Ellen did seethe the bones of the said child in a pot, and with the fat that came out of the said bones they said they would anoint themselves, that thereby they might sometimes change themselves into other shapes. And after all this being done, they said they would lay the bones again in the grave the next night following, but whether they did so or not this examinate knoweth not."—Potts' *Wonderful Discovery of Witches in the county of Lancashire*, 1613, sig. l. 2. The girl afterwards confessed that she had told a pack of lies. On 9th June, 1604, a statute was passed, which enacted that "if any person shall practise or exercise any invocation or conjuration of any evil or wicked spirit, or take up any man, woman, or child out of his, her, or their grave . . . or the skin, [bone, or any other part of any dead person to be employed or used in any manner of witchcraft, . . . or shall . . . practise . . . any witchcraft . . . whereby any person shall be killed, wasted, pined, or lamed in his or her body or any part thereof, such offender shall suffer the pains of death as felons without benefit of clergy or sanctuary."

Appear to our sight then even leek[1]
A russet mole upon some lady's cheek.
When hundred leagues in air, we feast and sing,
Dance, kiss, and coll,[2] use everything:
What young man can we wish to pleasure us,
But we enjoy him in an incubus?
Thou know'st it, Stadlin?
Stad. Usually that's done.
Hec. Last night thou got'st the mayor of Whelplie's[3] son;
I knew him by his black cloak lin'd with yellow;
I think thou'st spoil'd the youth, he's but seventeen:
I'll have him the next mounting. Away, in:
Go, feed the vessel for the second hour.
Stad. Where be the magical herbs?
Hec. They're down his throat;
His mouth cramm'd full, his ears and nostrils stuff'd.
I thrust in eleoselinum lately,
Aconitum, frondes populeas, and soot—
You may see that, he looks so b[l]ack i' th' mouth—
Then sium, acorum vulgare too,
Pentaphyllon,[4] the blood of a flitter-mouse,[5]
Solanum somnificum et oleum.
Stad. Then there's all, Hecate.
Hec. Is the heart of wax
Stuck full of magic needles?

---

[1] Like. [2] Embrace.
[3] "What place is meant by this word I know not."—*Dyce.*
[4] MS. "Dentaphillon." [5] Bat.

Stad. 'Tis done, Hecate.

Hec. And is the farmer's picture [1] and his wife's
Laid down to th' fire yet?

Stad. They're a-roasting both too.

Hec. Good [*exit* STADLIN]; then their marrows are a-melting subtly,
And three months' sickness sucks up life in 'em.
They denied me often flour, barm, and milk,
Goose-grease and tar, when I ne'er hurt their churnings,[2]
Their brew-locks, nor their batches, nor forespoke
Any of their breedings. Now I'll be meet [3] with 'em:
Seven of their young pigs I've bewitch'd already,
Of the last litter;
Nine ducklings, thirteen goslings, and a hog,
Fell lame last Sunday after even-song too;
And mark how their sheep prosper, or what sup
Each milch-kine gives to th' pail: I'll send these snakes
Shall milk 'em all

---

[1] "He being further demanded to what end the spirits in the likeness of toads and the pictures of man in wax or clay do serve, he said that pictures made in wax will cause the party (for whom it is made) to continue sick two whole years, because it will be two whole years ere the wax will be consumed. And as for the pictures of clay, their confection is after this manner. They used to take the earth of a new-made grave, the rib-bone of a man or woman burned to ashes; if it be for a woman they take the bone of a woman, if for a man the bone of a man; and a black spider with an inner pith of an elder, tempered all in water, in the which water the said toads must first be washed. And after all ceremonies ended, they put a prick, that is a pin or a thorn, in any member where they would have the party grieved. And if the said prick be put to the heart, the party dieth within nine dayes, which image they burn in the most moist place they can find."—*The Examination of John Walsh touching Witchcraft*, 1566.

[2] MS. "charmings." [3] Even.

Beforehand; the dew-skirted[1] dairy-wenches
Shall stroke dry dugs for this, and go home cursing;
I'll mar their sillabubs, and swathy[2] feastings
Under cows' bellies with the parish-youths.
Where's Firestone, our son Firestone?

Enter FIRESTONE.

Fire. Here am I, mother.

Hec. Take in this brazen dish full of dear ware:
[*Gives dish.*
Thou shalt have all when I die; and that will be
Even just at twelve a'clock at night come three year.

Fire. And may you not have one a'clock in to th' dozen, mother?

Hec. No.

Fire. Your spirits are, then, more unconscionable than bakers. You'll have lived then, mother, sixscore year to the hundred; and, methinks, after sixscore years, the devil might give you a cast, for he's a fruiterer, too, and has been from the beginning; the first apple that e'er was eaten came through his fingers: the costermonger's,[3] then, I hold to be the ancientest trade, though some would have the tailor pricked down before him.

Hec. Go, and take heed you shed not by the way;
The hour must have her portion! 'tis dear sirup;

---

[1] MS. "dew'd-skirted."

[2] "*i.e.* (I suppose) feastings among the *swaths*—the mown rows of grass."—*Dyce.*

[3] Apple-seller's.

Each charmed drop is able to confound
A family consisting of nineteen
Or one-and-twenty feeders.
Fire. Marry, here's stuff indeed!
Dear sirup call you it? a little thing
Would make me give you a dram on't in a posset,
And cut you three years shorter. [*Aside.*
Hec. Thou art now
About some villany.
Fire. Not I, forsooth.—
Truly the devil's in her, I think: how one villain smells out another straight! there's no knavery but is nosed like a dog, and can smell out a dog's meaning. [*Aside.*] —Mother, I pray, give me leave to ramble abroad to-night with the Nightmare, for I have a great mind to overlay a fat parson's daughter.
Hec. And who shall lie with me, then?
Fire. The great cat
For one night, mother; 'tis but a night:
Make shift with him for once.
Hec. You're a kind son!
But 'tis the nature of you all, I see that;
You had rather hunt after strange women still
Than lie with your own mothers. Get thee gone;
Sweat thy six ounces out about the vessel,
And thou shalt play at midnight; the Nightmare
Shall call thee when it walks.
Fire. Thanks, most sweet mother. [*Exit.*
Hec. Urchins, Elves, Hags, Satyrs, Pans, Fawns,

Sylvans,[1] Kitt-with-the-candlestick, Tritons, Centaurs, Dwarfs, Imps, the Spoorn, the Mare, the Man-i'-th'-oak, the Hellwain, the Fire-drake, the Puckle! A ab hur hus!

Enter SEBASTIAN.

Seb. Heaven knows with what unwillingness and hate
I enter this damn'd place: but such extremes
Of wrongs in love fight 'gainst religion's knowledge,
That were I led by this disease to deaths
As numberless as creatures that must die,
I could not shun the way. I know what 'tis
To pity madmen now; they're wretched things
That ever were created, if they be
Of woman's making, and her faithless vows.
I fear they're now a-kissing: what's a'clock?
'Tis now but supper-time; but night will come,
And all new-married couples make short suppers.—
Whate'er thou art, I've no spare time to fear thee;
My horrors are so strong and great already,
That thou seemest nothing. Up, and laze not:

[1] MS. "Silence."—"Here again Middleton borrows from Reginald Scot: 'And they haue so fraied vs with bull beggers, spirits, witches, *vrchens*, *elues*, *hags*, fairies, *satyrs*, *pans*, *faunes*, *sylens* [sylvans], *kit with the cansticke*, *tritons*, *centaurs*, *dwarfes*, giants, *imps*, calcars, coniurors, nymphes, changlings, Incubus, Robin good-fellowe, *the spoorne*, *the mare*, *the man in the oke*, *the hell waine*, *the fierdrake*, *the puckle*, Tom thombe, hob gobblin, Tom tumbler, boneles, and such other bugs, that we are afraid of our owne shadowes.'—*Discouerie of Witchcraft*, b. vii. c. xv. p. 153, ed. 1584 . . . The words with which Hecate concludes this speech, 'A ab hur hus!' are also borrowed from R. Scot's work, b. xii. c. xiv. p. 244, where they are mentioned as a charm against the toothache."—*Dyce.*

Hadst thou my business, thou couldst ne'er sit so;
'Twould firk thee into air a thousand mile,
Beyond thy ointments. I would I were read
So much in thy black power as[1] mine own griefs!
I'm in great need of help; wilt give me any?

Hec. Thy boldness takes me bravely; we're all sworn
To sweat for such a spirit: see, I regard thee;
I rise and bid thee welcome. What's thy wish now?

Seb. O, my heart swells with't! I must take breath first.

Hec. Is't to confound some enemy on the seas? 131
It may be done to-night: Stadlin's[2] within;
She raises all your sudden ruinous storms,
That shipwreck barks, and tears up growing oaks,
Flies over houses, and takes *Anno Domini*[3]
Out of a rich man's chimney—a sweet place for't!
He'd be hang'd ere he would set his own years there;

---

[1] MS. "and."

[2] "From R. Scot: 'It is constantlie affirmed in M. Mal. that Stafus vsed alwaies to hide himselfe in a monshoall [mouse-hole], and had a disciple called Hoppo, who made Stadlin a maister witch, and could all when they list inuisiblie transferre the third part of their neighbours doong, hay, corne, &c. into their owne ground, make haile, tempests, and flouds, with thunder and lightning; and kill children, cattell, &c.: reueale things hidden, and many other tricks, when and where they list.' *Discouerie of Witchcraft*, b. xii. c. v. p. 222, ed. 1584.—See Sprenger's *Malleus Maleficarum*, Pars Sec. quæst. i. cap. xv. p. 267, ed. 1576, where the name *Stadio*, not *Stadlin*, is found; but the latter occurs at p. 210."—*Dyce*. Bodin relates that a man named "Stadlin," belonging to the diocese of Lausanne, "confessa avoir tué sept enfans au ventre de la mère." Stadlin buried a live serpent at the entrance to the poor woman's house; when the ground was dug up, the serpent made his escape and the woman had no more still-born children (*De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, lib. ii. cap. 8). The same tale is told in Sprenger's *Malleus Maleficarum*, pars. i. quæst. i. cap. 6.

[3] The date affixed to the house.

They must be chamber'd in a five-pound picture,
A green silk curtain drawn before the eyes on't;
His rotten, diseas'd years!—or dost thou envy
The fat prosperity of any neighbour?
I'll call forth Hoppo, and her incantation
Can straight destroy the young of all his cattle;
Blast vineyards, orchards, meadows; or in one night
Transport his dung, hay, corn, by reeks,[1] whole stacks,
Into thine own ground.

Seb. This would come most richly now
To many a country grazier; but my envy
Lies not so low as cattle, corn, or wines:
'Twill trouble your best powers to give me ease.

Hec. Is it to starve up generation?
To strike a barrenness in man or woman?

Seb. Hah!

Hec. Hah, did you feel me there? I knew your grief.

Seb. Can there be such things done?

Hec. Are these the skins
Of serpents? these of snakes?

Seb. I see they are.

Hec. So sure into what house these are convey'd,
[*Giving serpent skins, &c., to* SEBASTIAN.
Knit with these charms and retentive knots,
Neither the man begets nor woman breeds,
No, nor performs the least desires of wedlock,
Being then a mutual duty. I could give thee

[1] Ricks.

Chirocineta,[1] adincantida,
Archimedon, marmaritin, calicia,
Which I could sort to villanous barren ends;
But this leads the same way. More I could instance;
As, the same needles thrust into their pillows
That sews and socks up dead men in their sheets;
A privy gristle[2] of a man that hangs
After sunset; good, excellent; yet all's there, sir.

Seb. You could not do a man that special kindness
To part 'em utterly now? could you do that?

Hec. No, time must do't: we cannot disjoin wedlock;
'Tis of heaven's fastening. Well may we raise jars,
Jealousies, strifes, and heart-burning disagreements,
Like a thick scurf o'er life, as did our master
Upon that patient miracle;[3] but the work itself
Our power cannot disjoint.

Seb. I depart happy
In what I have then, being constrain'd to this.—
And grant, you greater powers that dispose men,
That I may never need this hag agen! [*Aside, and exit.*

---

[1] "Pythagoras and Democritus giue vs the names of a great manie magicall hearbs and stones, whereof now both the vertue and the things themselues also are vnknowne; as *Marmaritin*, whereby spirits might be raised: *Archimedon*, which would make one bewraie in his sleepe all the secrets in his heart: *Adincantida*, *Calicia*, Meuais, *Chirocineta*, &c.: which had all their seuerall vertues, or rather poisons." R. Scot's *Discouerie of Witchcraft*, b. vi. c. iii. p. 117, ed. 1584.

[2] Cf. *The Masque of Queens*:—

> "A murderer, yonder, was hung in chains,
> The sun and the wind had shrunk his veins;
> I bit off a sinew, I clipped his hair,
> I brought off his rags that danced in the air."

[3] "That patient miracle"—Job.

Hec. I know he loves me not,[1] nor there's no hope on't;

'Tis for the love of mischief I do this,
And that we're sworn to the first oath we take.

Re-enter FIRESTONE.

Fire. O mother, mother!

Hec. What's the news with thee now?

Fire. There's the bravest[2] young gentleman within, and the fineliest drunk! I thought he would have fallen into the vessel; he stumbled at a pipkin of child's grease; reeled against Stadlin, overthrew her, and in the tumbling-cast struck up old Puckle's heels with her clothes over her ears.

Hec. Hoyday!

Fire. I was fain to throw the cat upon her to save her honesty, and all little enough; I cried out still, I pray, be covered.[3] See where he comes now, mother.

Enter ALMACHILDES.

Alm. Call you these witches? they be tumblers methinks,
Very flat tumblers.

---

[1] "And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful and wrathful; who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you."—*Macbeth*, iii. 5.

[2] The most handsomely dressed.

[3] The ordinary meaning of "be covered" was "put on your hat."

Hec. 'Tis Almachildes—fresh blood stirs in me—
The man that I have lusted to enjoy;
I've had him thrice in incubus already. [*Aside.*
Alm. Is your name Goody Hag?
Hec. 'Tis anything:
Call me the horrid'st and unhallow'd things
That life and nature trembles at, for thee
I'll be the same. Thou com'st for a love-charm now?
Alm. Why, thou'rt a witch, I think.
Hec. Thou shalt have choice of twenty, wet or dry.
Alm. Nay, let's have dry ones.
Hec. If thou wilt use't by way of cup and potion,
I'll give thee a remora[1] shall bewitch her straight.
Alm. A remora? what's that?
Hec. A little suck-stone;
Some call it a sea-lamprey, a small fish.
Alm. And must be butter'd?
Hec. The bones of a green frog too, wondrous precious,
The flesh consum'd by pismires.
Alm. Pismires? give me a chamber-pot!
Fire. You shall see him go nigh to be so unmannerly,
he'll make water before my mother anon. [*Aside.*
Alm. And now you talk of frogs, I've somewhat here;
I come not empty-pocketed from a banquet,
I learn'd that of my haberdasher's wife:
Look, goody witch, there's a toad in marchpane[2] for you. [*Gives marchpane.*

[1] See note, vol. iv. p. 179.
[2] "Marchpane was a composition of almonds and sugar, &c.

Hec. O sir, you've fitted me?
Alm. And here's a spawn or two
Of the same paddock-brood too, for your son.
[*Gives other pieces of marchpane.*
Fire. I thank your worship, sir: how comes your handkercher
So sweetly thus beray'd?[1] sure 'tis wet sucket,[2] sir.
Alm. 'Tis nothing but the sirup the toad spit;
Take all, I prithee.
Hec. This was kindly done, sir;
And you shall sup with me to-night for this.
Alm. How? sup with thee? dost think I'll eat fried rats
And pickled spiders?
Hec. No; I can command, sir,
The best meat i' th' whole province for my friends,
And reverently serv'd in too.
Alm. How?
Hec. In good fashion.
Alm. Let me but see that, and I'll sup with you.
[HECATE *conjures; and enter a Cat playing on a fiddle, and Spirits with meat.*
The Cat and Fiddle's an excellent ordinary:
You had a devil once in a fox-skin?

---

pounded and baked together. It was a constant article at [illegible] [i.e. desserts], and was wrought into [illegible] Taylor, [illegible] poet, mentions [illegible] dry shapes, [illegible] 1630."—[illegible]

[1] [illegible]

Hec. O sir, you've fitted me?
Alm. And here's a spawn or two
Of the same paddock-brood too, for your son.
[*Gives other pieces of marchpane.*
Fire. I thank your worship, sir: how comes your handkercher
So sweetly thus beray'd?[1] sure 'tis wet sucket,[2] sir.
Alm. 'Tis nothing but the sirup the toad spit;
Take all, I prithee.
Hec. This was kindly done, sir;
And you shall sup with me to-night for this.
Alm. How? sup with thee? dost think I'll eat fried rats
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The best meat i' th' whole province for my friends,
And reverently serv'd in too.
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The Cat and Fiddle's an excellent ordinary:
You had a devil once in a fox-skin?

---

pounded and baked together. It was a constant article at *banquets* [*i.e.* desserts], and was wrought into various figures. Taylor, the water-poet, mentions

> 'Conserv's and *Marchpanes*, made in sundry shapes,
> As Castles, Towres, Horses, Beares and Apes.'
> *The Siege of Jerusalem*, p. 15—*Workes*, 1630."—*Dyce.*

[1] Befouled. [2] Sweetmeat.

Hec. O, I have him still: come, walk with me, sir.

[*Exeunt all except* FIRESTONE.

Fire. How apt and ready is a drunkard now to reel to the devil! Well, I'll even in and see how he eats; and I'll be hanged if I be not the fatter of the twain with laughing at him. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A hall in ANTONIO'S *house.*

Enter ANTONIO *and* GASPARO.

Gas. Good sir, whence springs this sadness? trust me, sir,
You look not like a man was married yesterday:
There could come no ill tidings since last night
To cause that discontent. I was wont to know all,
Before you had a wife, sir: you ne'er found me
Without those parts of manhood, trust and secrecy.

Ant. I will not tell thee this.

Gas. Not your true servant, sir?

Ant. True? you'll all flout according to your talent,
The best a man can keep of you: and a hell 'tis
For masters to pay wages to be laugh'd at.
Give order that two cocks be boil'd to jelly.

Gas. How? two cocks boil'd to jelly?

Ant. Fetch half an ounce of pearl. [*Exit.*

Gas. This is a cullis [1]

[1] A rich broth, in the composition of which pearls and gold were used. In Nares' *Glossary, sub* CULLIS, there is a curious receipt from the *Haven of Health* for making "a coleise of a cocke."

For a consumption ; and I hope one night
Has not brought you to need the cook already,
And some part of the goldsmith : what, two trades
In four-and-twenty hours, and less time ?
Pray heaven, the surgeon and the pothecary
Keep out ! and then 'tis well. You'd better fortune,
As far as I see, with your strumpet sojourner,
Your little four nobles [1] a-week : I ne'er knew you
Eat one panado [2] all the time you've kept her ;
And is't in one night now come up to two-cock-broth ?
I wonder at the alteration strangely.

Enter FRANCISCA.

Fran. Good morrow, Gaspar.
Gas. Your hearty wishes, mistress,
And your sweet dreams come upon you !
Fran. What's that, sir ?
Gas. In a good husband ; that's my real meaning.
Fran. Saw you my brother lately ?
Gas. Yes.
Fran. I met him now,
As sad, methought, as grief could make a man :
Know you the cause ?

---

[1] Gold coins worth 6s. 8d.

[2] "'To make *panado* after the best fashion.—Take a quart of spring-water, which being hot on the fire, put into it slices of fine bread, as thin as may be ; then add half a pound of currants, a quarter of an ounce of mace, boil them well, and then season them with rose water and fine sugar, and serve them up.' *Closet of Rarities*, 1706."—Nares' *Glossary*, ed. Halliwell.

Gas. Not I: I know nothing,
But half an ounce of pearl, and kitchen business,
Which I will see perform'd with all fidelity:
I'll break my trust in nothing, not in porridge, I. [*Exit.*

Fran. I have the hardest fortune, I think, of a hundred gentlewomen:
Some can make merry with a friend seven year,
And nothing seen; as perfect a maid still,
To the world's knowledge, as she came from rocking.
But 'twas my luck, at the first hour, forsooth,
To prove too fruitful; sure I'm near my time;
I'm yet but a young scholar, I may fail
In my account; but certainly I do not.
These bastards come upon poor venturing gentlewomen ten to one faster than your legitimate children: if I had been married, I'll be hanged if I had been with child so soon now. When they are our husbands, they'll be whipt ere they take such pains as a friend will do; to come by water to the back-door at midnight, there stay perhaps an hour in all weathers, with a pair of reeking watermen laden with bottles of wine, chewets,[1] and currant-custards. I may curse those egg-pies, they are meat that help forward too fast.
This hath been usual with me night by night,
Honesty forgive me! when my brother has been
Dreaming of no such junckets; yet he hath far'd
The better for my sake, though he little think
For what, nor must he ever. My friend promis'd me

[1] Minced-meat pies.

To provide safely for me, and devise
A means to save my credit here i' th' house.
My brother sure would kill me if he knew't,
And powder up my friend, and all his kindred,
For an East Indian voyage.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Alone, sister?

Fran. No, there's another with me, though you see't not.— [*Aside.*

Morrow, sweet sister: how have you slept to-night?

Isa. More than I thought I should; I've had good rest.

Fran. I am glad to hear't.

Isa. Sister, methinks you are too long alone,
And lose much good time, sociable and honest:
I'm for the married life; I must praise that now.

Fran. I cannot blame you, sister, to commend it;
You've happen'd well, no doubt, on a kind husband,
And that's not every woman's fortune, sister:
You know if he were any but my brother,
My praises should not leave him yet so soon.

Isa. I must acknowledge, sister, that my life
Is happily blest with him: he is no gamester,[1]
That ever I could find or hear of yet,
Nor midnight surfeiter; he does intend
To leave tobacco too.

Fran. Why, here's a husband!

[1] Profligate

Isa. He saw it did offend me, and swore freely
He'd ne'er take pleasure in a toy [1] again
That should displease me: some knights' wives in town
Will have great hope, upon his reformation,
To bring their husbands' breaths into th' old fashion,
And make 'em kiss like Christians, not like Pagans.
Fran. I promise you, sister, 'twill be a worthy work
To put down all these pipers; 'tis great pity
There should not be a statute against them,
As against fiddlers.
Isa. These good offices,
If you had a husband, you might exercise,
To th' good o' th' commonwealth, and do much profit:
Beside, it is a comfort to a woman
T' have children, sister; a great blessing certainly.
Fran. They will come fast enough.
Isa. Not so fast neither
As they're still welcome to an honest woman.
Fran. How near she comes to me! I protest she grates
My very skin. [*Aside.*
Isa. Were I conceiv'd with child,
Beshrew my heart, I should be so proud on't!
Fran. That's natural; pride is a kind of swelling:—
But yet I've small cause to be proud of mine. [*Aside.*
Isa. You are no good companion for a wife:
Get you a husband; prithee, sister, do,
That I may ask your counsel now and then:

[1] Trifle.

'Twill mend your discourse much; you maids know nothing.

Fran. No, we are fools; but commonly we prove
Quicker mothers than you that have husbands:—
I'm sure I shall else: I may speak for one. [*Aside.*

Re-enter ANTONIO.

Ant. I will not look upon her; I'll pass by,
And make as though I see her not. [*Aside.*

Isa. Why, sir,—
Pray, your opinion, by the way, with leave, sir:
I'm counselling your sister here to marry.

Ant. To marry? soft; the priest is not at leisure yet;
Some five year hence.—Would you fain marry, sister?

Fra. I've no such hunger to't, sir,—for I think
I've a good bit that well may stay my stomach,
As well as any that broke fast, a sinner. [*Aside.*

Ant. Though she seem tall of growth, she's short in years
Of some that seem much lower.—How old, sister?
Not seventeen, for a yard of lawn!

Fran. Not yet, sir.

Ant. I told you so.

Fran. I would he'd laid a wager of old shirts rather,
I shall have more need of them shortly; and yet,
A yard of lawn will serve for a christening-cloth;
I've use for everything, as my case stands. [*Aside.*

Isa. I care not if I try my voice this morning;
But I have got a cold, sir, by your means.

Ant. I'll strive to mend that fault.

Isa. I thank you, sir. [*Sings.*

In a maiden-time profest,
Then we say that life is best;
Tasting once the married life,
Then we only praise the wife:
There's but one state more to try,
Which makes women laugh or cry—
Widow, widow: of these three
The middle's best, and that give me.

Ant. There's thy reward. [*Kisses her.*

Isa. I will not grumble, sir,
Like some musician; if more come, 'tis welcome.

Fran. Such tricks has made me do all that I have done:
Your kissing married folks spoils all the maids
That ever live i' th' house with 'em. O, here
He comes with his bags and bottles; he was born
To lead poor watermen[1] and I. [*Aside.*

Enter ABERZANES, *and* Servants *carrying baked meats and bottles.*

Aber. Go, fellows, into th' larder; let the bake-meats
Be sorted by themselves.

Ant. Why, sir—

Aber. Look the canary-bottles be well stopt;
The three of claret shall be drunk at dinner.
[*Exeunt* Servants.

[1] Cf. l. 50.

Ant. My good sir, you're too plenteous of these courtesies,
Indeed you are; forbear 'em, I beseech ye:
I know no merit in me, but poor love
And a true friend's well-wishing, that can cause
This kindness in excess.—I' th' state that I am,
I shall go near to kick this fellow shortly,
And send him down stairs with his bag and baggage:
Why comes he now I'm married? there's the point.
[*Aside.*
I pray, forbear these things.
Aber. Alas! you know, sir,
These idle toys, which you call courtesies,
They cost me nothing but my servants' travail!
One office must be kind, sir, to another:
You know the fashion. What! the gentlewoman
Your sister 's sad, methinks.
Ant. I know no cause she has.
Fran. Nor shall you, by my good will. [*Aside.*]—
What do you mean, sir?
Shall I stay here, to shame myself and you?
The time may be to-night, for aught you know.
Aber. Peace; there's means wrought, I tell thee.

Enter SEBASTIAN *and* Gentleman.

Fran. Ay, sir, when?
Ant. How now? what's he?
Isa. O, this is the man, sir,
I entertain'd this morning for my service;
Please you to give your liking.

Ant. Yes, he's welcome;
I like him not amiss.—Thou wouldst speak business,
Wouldst thou not?
Seb. Yes; may it please you, sir,
There is a gentleman from the northern parts
Hath brought a letter, as it seems, in haste.
Ant. From whom?
Gent. Your bonny lady mother, sir.
[*Giving letter to* ANTONIO.
Ant. You are kindly welcome, sir: how doth she?
Gent. I left her heal[1] varray well, sir.
Ant. [*reads.*] *I pray send your sister down with all speed to me: I hope it will prove much for her good in the way of her preferment. Fail me not, I desire you, son, nor let any excuse of hers withhold her; I have sent, ready furnished, horse and man for her.*
Aber. Now, have I thought upon you?
Fran. Peace, good sir;
You're worthy of a kindness another time.
Ant. Her will shall be obey'd.—Sister, prepare yourself;
You must down with all speed.
Fran. I know, down I must;
And good speed send me! [*Aside.*
Ant. 'Tis our mother's pleasure.
Fran. Good sir, write back again, and certify her
I'm at my heart's wish here; I'm with my friends,
And can be but well, say.

---

[1] "*i.e.*, health—*Scotch*—at Ravenna!"—*Dyce.*

Ant. You shall pardon me, sister;
I hold it no wise part to contradict her,
Nor would I counsel you to't.
Fran. 'Tis so uncouth
Living i' th' country, now I'm us'd to th' city,
That I shall ne'er endure't.
Aber. Perhaps, forsooth,
'Tis not her meaning you shall live there long:
I do not think but after a month or so,
You'll be sent up again; that's my conceit.
However, let her have her will.
Ant. Ay, good sir,
Great reason 'tis she should.
Isa. I'm sorry, sister,
'Tis our hard fortune thus to part so soon.
Fran. The sorrow will be mine.
Ant. Please you walk in, sir;
We'll have one health unto those northern parts,
Though I be sick at heart.
[*Exeunt* ANTONIO, ISABELLA, *and* Gentleman.
Aber. Ay, sir, a deep one—
Which you shall pledge too.
Fran. You shall pardon me;
I have pledg'd one too deep already, sir.
Aber. Peace; all's provided for: thy wine's laid in,
Sugar and spice; the place not ten mile hence.
What cause have maids now to complain of men,
When a farmhouse can make all whole agen?
[*Exeunt* ABERZANES *and* FRANCISCA.

Seb. It takes; has no content: how well she bears it yet!
Hardly myself can find so much from her
That am acquainted with the cold disease:
O honesty's a rare wealth in a woman!
It knows no want, at least will express none,
Not in a look. Yet I'm not throughly happy:
His ill does me no good; well may it keep me
From open rage and madness for a time,
But I feel heart's grief in the same place still.
What makes the greatest torment 'mongst lost souls?
'Tis not so much the horror of their pains,
Though they be infinite, as the loss of joys;
It is that deprivation is the mother
Of all the groans in hell, and here on earth
Of all the red sighs in the hearts of lovers.
Still she's not mine, that can be no man's else
Till I be nothing, if religion
Have the same strength for me as 't has for others:
Holy vows, witness that our souls were married!

Re-enter GASPARO, *ushering in* Lord Governor *attended by* Gentlemen.

Gas. Where are you, sir? come, pray, give your attendance;
Here's my lord governor come.
Gov. Where's our new kindred?
Not stirring yet, I think.

Gas. Yes, my good lord:
Please you, walk near.
Gov. Come, gentlemen, we'll enter.
Seb. I ha' done't upon a breach; this is a less venture.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Gallery in the Duke's House.

Enter ALMACHILDES.

Alm. What a mad toy[1] took me to sup with witches!
Fie of all drunken humours! by this hand,
I could beat myself when I think on't: and the rascals
Made me good cheer too; and to my understanding then
Eat some of every dish, and spoil'd the rest:
But coming to my lodging, I remember
I was as hungry as a tirèd foot-post.
What's this? [*Takes from his pocket a ribbon.*
O, 'tis the charm her hagship gave me
For my duchess' obstinate woman; round about
A threepenny silk ribbon of three colours,
Necte tribus nodis ternos Amoretta colores:
Amoretta! why, there's her name indeed:
Necte Amoretta; again, two boughts,[2]
Nodo et Veneris dic vincula necte;
Nay, if Veneris be one, I'm sure there's no dead flesh in't.

[1] Fancy. [2] Knots.

If I should undertake to construe this now,
I should make a fine piece of work of it,
For few young gallants are given to good construction
Of anything, hardly of their best friends' wives,
Sisters, or nieces. Let me see what I can do now.
Necte tribus nodis,—Nick of the tribe of noddies:
Ternos colores,—that makes turned colours;
Nodo et Veneris,—goes to his venery like a noddy;
Dic vincula,—with Dick the vintner's boy.
Here were a sweet charm now, if this were the meaning on't, and very likely to overcome an honourable gentlewoman. The whorson old hellcat would have given me the brain of a cat[1] once in my handkercher; I bade her make sauce with't, with a vengeance! and a little bone in the hithermost part of a wolf's tail; I bade her pick her teeth with't, with a pestilence! Nay, this is somewhat cleanly yet and handsome; a coloured ribbon, a fine, gentle charm! a man may give't his sister, his brother's wife, ordinarily. See, here she comes, luckily.

Enter AMORETTA.

Amo. Blest powers, what secret sin have I committed
That still you send this punishment upon me?
Alm. 'Tis but a gentle punishment; so take it.

[1] Cf. Ben Jonson's *Masque of Queens*:—

> "I from the jaws of a gardener's bitch
> Did snatch these bones and then leap'd the ditch:
> Yet went I back to the house again,
> Kill'd the black cat, and here's the brain."

Amo. Why, sir, what mean you? will you ravish me?
Alm. What, in the gallery, and the sun peep in?
There's fitter time and place.—
[*As he embraces her, he thrusts the ribbon into her bosom.*
'Tis in her bosom now. [*Aside.*
Amo. Go, you're the rudest thing e'er came at court!
Alm. Well, well; I hope you'll tell me another tale
Ere you be two hours older: a rude thing?
I'll make you eat your word; I'll make all split[1] else.
[*Exit*
Amo. Nay, now I think on't better, I'm to blame too;
There's not a sweeter gentleman in court;
Nobly descended too, and dances well.
Beshrew my heart, I'll take him when there's time;
He will be catch'd up quickly. The duchess says
Sh'as some employment for him, and has sworn me
To use my best art in't: life of my joys,
There were good stuff! I will not trust her with him.
I'll call him back again; he must not keep
Out of my sight so long; I shall grow mad then.

Enter Duchess.

Duch. He lives not now to see to-morrow spent,
If this means take effect, as there's no hardness in't.
Last night he play'd his horrid game again,
Came to my bedside at the full of midnight,
And in his hand that fatal, fearful cup;

[1] See note 3, vol. iv. p. 104.

Wak'd me, and forc'd me pledge him, to my trembling
And my dead father's scorn: that wounds my sight,
That his remembrance should be rais'd in spite:
But either his confusion or mine ends it.— [*Aside.*
O, Amoretta,—hast thou met him yet?
Speak, wench, hast done that for me?

Amo. What, good madam?

Duch. Destruction of my hopes! dost ask that now?
Didst thou not swear to me, out of thy hate
To Almachildes, thou'dst dissemble him
A loving entertainment, and a meeting
Where I should work my will?

Amo. Good madam, pardon me:
A loving entertainment I do protest
Myself to give him, with all speed I can too;
But, as I'm yet a maid, a perfect one
As the old time was wont to afford, when
There was few tricks and little cunning stirring,
I can dissemble none that will serve your turn;
He must have even a right one and a plain one.

Duch. Thou mak'st me doubt thy health; speak, art thou well?

Amo. O, never better! if he would make haste
And come back quickly! he stays now too long.
[*The ribbon falls out of her bosom.*

Duch. I'm quite lost in this woman: what's that fell
Out of her bosom now? some love-token?

Amo. Nay, I'll say that for him, he's the uncivil'st gentleman,
And every way desertless.

Duch. Who's that now
She discommends so fast?
Amo. I could not love him, madam,
Of any man in court.
Duch. What's he now, prithee?
Amo. Who should it be but Almachildes, madam?
I never hated man so deeply yet.
Duch. As Almachildes?
Amo. I am sick, good madam,
When I but hear him nam'd.
Duch. How is this possible?
But now thou saidst thou lov'dst him, and didst raise him
'Bove all the court in praises.
Amo. How great people
May speak their pleasure, madam! but surely I
Should think the worse of my tongue while I liv'd then.
Duch. No longer have I patience to forbear thee,
Thou that retain'st an envious soul to goodness!
He is a gentleman deserves as much
As ever fortune yet bestow'd on man;
The glory and prime lustre of our court;
Nor can there any but ourself be worthy of him.
And take you notice of that now from me,
Say you have warning on't, if you did love him,
You must not now.
Amo. Let your grace never fear it.
Duch. Thy name is Amoretta, as ours is;
'Thas made me love and trust thee.
Amo. And my faithfulness
Has appear'd well i' th' proof still; has't not, madam?

Duch. But if't fail now, 'tis nothing.
Amo. Then it shall not.
I know he will not be long from fluttering
'Bout this place, now has had a sight of me;
And I'll perform
In all that I vow'd, madam, faithfully.
Duch. Then am I blest both in revenge and love,
And thou shalt taste the sweetness. [*Exit.*
Amo. What your aims be
I list not to inquire; all I desire
Is to preserve a competent honesty,
Both for mine own and his use that shall have me,

Re-enter ALMACHILDES.

Whose luck soe'er it be. O, he's return'd already;
I knew he would not fail.
Alm. It works by this time,
Or the devil's in't, I think; I'll ne'er trust witch else,
Nor sup with 'em this twelvemonth. [*Aside.*
Amo. I must soothe him now;
And 'tis great pain to do't against one's stomach.
[*Aside.*
Alm. Now, Amoretta!
Amo. Now you're welcome, sir,
If you'd come always thus.
Alm. O, am I so?
Is the case alter'd[1] since?

[1] *The case is altered* was a proverbial expression.

Amo. If you'd be ru[l']d,
And know your times, 'twere somewhat; a great comfort.
'Las, I could be as loving and as venturous
As any woman—we're all flesh and blood, man—
If you could play the game out modestly,
And not betray your hand. I must have care, sir;
You know I have a marriage-time to come,
And that's for life: your best folks will be merry,
But look to the main chance, that's reputation,
And then do what they list.
Alm. Wilt hear my oath?
By the sweet health of youth, I will be careful,
And never prate on't, nor, like a cunning snarer,
Make thy clipp'd[1] name the bird to call in others.
Amo. Well, yielding then to such conditions
As my poor bashfulness shall require from you,
I shall yield shortly after.
Alm. I'll consent to 'em;
And may thy sweet humility be a pattern
For all proud women living!
Amo. They're beholding to you. [*Exeunt.*

[1] *Cleped*—called.

SCENE III.

The Neighbourhood of Ravenna.

Enter ABERZANES, *and* Old Woman *carrying an infant.*

Aber. So, so, away with him! I love to get 'em,
But not to keep 'em. Dost thou know the house?
Old Wom. No matter for the house, I know the porch.
Aber. There's sixpence more for that: away, keep close.— [*Exit* Old Woman.
My tailor told me he sent away a maid-servant
Well ballast of all sides within these nine days;
His wife ne'er dream'd on't; gave the drab ten pounds,
And she ne'er troubles him: a common fashion
He told me 'twas to rid away a scape;
And I have sent him this for't. I remember
A friend of mine once serv'd a prating tradesman
Just on this fashion, to a hair, in troth.
'Tis a good ease to a man: you can swell a maid up,
And rid her for ten pound; there's the purse back again,
Whate'er becomes of your money or your maid.
This comes of bragging, now. It's well for the boy too;
He'll get an excellent trade by't; and on Sundays
Go like a gentleman that has pawn'd his rapier:
He need not care what countryman his father was,
Nor what his mother was when he was gotten:
The boy will do well certain: give him grace
To have a quick hand and convey things cleanly!

Enter FRANCISCA.

'Twill be his own another day. O, well said!
Art almost furnish'd? there's such a toil always
To set a woman to horse, a mighty trouble.
The letter came to your brother's hands, I know,
On Thursday last by noon: you were expected there
Yesterday night.

Fran. It makes the better, sir.

Aber. We must take heed we ride through all the puddles
'Twixt this and that now, that your safeguard[1] there
Maybe most probably dabbled.

Fran. Alas! sir,
I never mark'd till now—I hate myself—
How monstrous thin I look!

Aber. Not monstrous neither;
A little sharp i' th' nose, like a country woodcock.

Fran. Fie, fie, how pale I am! I shall betray myself.
I would you'd box me well and handsomely,
To get me into colour.

Aber. Not I, pardon me;
That let a husband do when he has married you:
A friend at court will never offer that.
Come, how much spice and sugar have you left now,
At this poor one month's voyage?

Fran. Sure, not much, sir;

[1] See note 2, vol. iv. p. 38.

I think some quarter of a pound of sugar,
And half an ounce of spice.
Aber. Here's no [1] sweet charge!
And there was thirty pound good weight and true,
Beside what my man stole when 'twas a-weighing,
And that was three pound more, I'll speak with least.
The Rhenish wine, is't all run out in caudles too?
Fran. Do you ask that, sir? 'tis of a week's departure.
You see what 'tis now to get children, sir.

Enter Boy.

Boy. Your mares are ready both, sir.
Aber. Come, we'll up, then.—
Youth, give my sister a straight wand: there's twopence.
Boy. I'll give her a fine whip, sir.
Aber. No, no, no;
Though we have both deserv'd it.
Boy. Here's a new one.
Aber. Prithee, talk to us of no whips, good boy;
My heart aches when I see 'em.—Let's away. [*Exeunt.*

[1] Ironical.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Duke's House.

Enter Duchess, *leading* ALMACHILDES *blindfold.*

Alm. This you that was a maid? how are you born
To deceive men! I'd thought to have married you:
I had been finely handled, had I not?
I'll say that man is wise ever hereafter
That tries his wife beforehand. 'Tis no marvel
You should profess such bashfulness, to blind one,
As if you durst not look a man i' th' face,
Your modesty would blush so. Why do you not run
And tell the duchess now? go; you should tell all:
Let her know this too.—Why, here's the plague now:
'Tis hard at first to win 'em; when they're gotten,
There's no way to be rid on 'em; they stick
To a man like bird-lime.—My oath is out:
Will you release me? I'll release myself else.

Duch. Nay, sure, I'll bring you to your sight again.
[*Taking off the bandage from his eyes.*

Say, thou must either die, or kill the duke;
For one of them thou must do.
Alm. How, good madam?
Duch. Thou hast thy choice, and to that purpose, sir,
I've given thee knowledge now of what thou hast,
And what thou must do, to be worthy on't.
You must not think to come by such a fortune
Without desert; that were unreasonable.
He that's not born to honour must not look
To have it come with ease to him; he must win't.
Take but unto thine actions wit and courage,
That's all we ask of thee. But if through weakness
Of a poor spirit thou deniest me this,
Think but how thou shalt die! as I'll work means for't,
No murderer ever like thee; for I purpose
To call this subtle, sinful snare of mine
An act of force from thee. Thou'rt proud and youthful;
I shall be believ'd: besides, thy wantonness
Is at this hour in question 'mongst our women,
Which will make ill for thee.
Alm. I had hard chance
To light upon this pleasure that's so costly;
'Tis not content with what a man can do,
And give him breath, but seeks to have that too.
Duch. Well, take thy choice.
Alm. I see no choice in't, madam,
For 'tis all death, methinks.
Duch. Thou'st an ill sight then
Of a young man. 'Tis death if thou refuse it;
And say, my zeal has warn'd thee. But consenting,

'Twill be new life, great honour, and my love,
Which in perpetual bands I'll fasten to thee.
Alm. How, madam?
Duch. I'll do't religiously;
Make thee my husband; may I lose all sense
Of pleasure in life else, and be more miserable
Than ever creature was! for nothing lives
But has a joy in somewhat.
Alm. Then by all
The hopeful fortunes of a young man's rising,
I will perform it, madam.
Duch. There's a pledge then
Of a duchess' love for thee; and now trust me
For thy most happy safety. I will choose
That time shall never hurt thee: when a man
Shows resolution, and there's worth in him,
I'll have a care of him. Part now for this time;
But still be near about us, till thou canst
Be nearer, that's ourself.
Alm. And that I'll venture hard for.
Duch. Good speed to thee! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment in ANTONIO'S *House.*

Enter GASPARO *and* FLORIDA.

Flo. Prithee, be careful of me, very careful now!
Gas. I warrant you: he that cannot be careful of a

quean, can be careful of nobody; 'tis every man's humour that: I should never look to a wife half so handsomely.

Flo. O softly, sweet sir! should your mistress meet me now
In her own house, I were undone for ever.

Gas. Never fear her: she's at her prick-song close;
There's all the joy she has, or takes delight in.
Look, here's the garden key, my master gave't me,
And will'd me to be careful: doubt not you on't.

Flo. Your master is a noble complete gentleman,
And does a woman all the right that may be.

Enter SEBASTIAN.

Seb. How now? what's she?

Gas. A kind of doubtful creature:
I'll tell thee more anon.

[*Exeunt* GASPARO *and* FLORIDA.

Seb. I know that face
To be a strumpet's, or mine eye is envious,
And would fain wish it so where I would have it.
I fail, if the condition[1] of this fellow
Wears not about it a strong scent of baseness.
I saw her once before here, five days since 'tis,
And the same wary panderous diligence
Was then bestow'd on her: she came alter'd then,
And more inclining to the city-tuck.[2]

[1] Disposition, character.
[2] So MS.—Qu. "city-*truck*?"

Whom should this piece of transformation visit,
After the common courtesy of frailty,
In our house here? surely not any servant;
They are not kept so lusty, she so low.
I'm at a strange stand: love and luck assist me!

Re-enter GASPARO.

The truth I shall win from him by false play.
He's now return'd.—Well, sir, as you were saying,—
Go forward with your tale.
Gas. What? I know nothing.
Seb. The gentlewoman.
Gas. She's gone out at the back-door now.
Seb. Then farewell she, and you, if that be all.
Gas. Come, come, thou shalt have more: I have no power
To lock myself up from thee.
Seb. So methinks.
Gas. You shall not think, trust me, sir, you shall not:
Your ear; she's one o' th' falling family,
A quean my master keeps; she lies at Rutney's.
Seb. Is't possible? I thought I'd seen her somewhere.
Gas. I tell you truth sincerely. Sh'as been thrice here
By stealth within these ten days, and departed still
With pleasure and with thanks, sir; 'tis her luck.
Surely I think if ever there were man
Bewitch'd in this world, 'tis my master, sirrah.
Seb. Think'st thou so, Gaspar?
Gas. O sir, too apparent.

Seb. This may prove happy: 'tis the likeliest means
That fortune yet e'er show'd me. [*Aside.*

Enter ISABELLA *with a letter.*

Isa. You're both here now,
And strangers newly lighted! where's your attendance?
Seb. I know what makes you waspish: a pox on't.
She'll every day be angry now at nothing. [*Aside.*
[*Exeunt* GASPARO *and* SEBASTIAN.
Isa. I'll call her stranger ever in my heart:
Sh'as kill'd the name of sister through base lust,
And fled to shifts. O how a brother's good thoughts
May be beguil'd in woman! here's a letter,
Found in her absence, reports strangely of her,
And speaks her impudence: sh'as undone herself—
I could not hold from weeping when I read it—
Abus'd her brother's house and his good confidence.
'Twas done not like herself; I blame her much:
But if she can but keep it from his knowledge,
I will not grieve him first; it shall not come
By my means to his heart.—

Re-enter GASPARO.

Now, sir, the news.
Gas. You called 'em strangers; 'tis my master's sister, madam.
Isa. O, is it so? she's welcome: who's come with her?
Gas. I see none but Aberzanes. [*Exit.*

Isa. He's enough
To bring a woman to confusion,
More than a wiser man or a far greater.
A letter came last week to her brother's hands,
To make way for her coming up again,
After her shame was lighten'd; and she writ there,
The gentleman her mother wish'd her to,
Taking a violent surfeit at a wedding,
Died ere she came to see him: what strange cunning
Sin helps a woman to! Here she comes now.—

Enter FRANCISCA *and* ABERZANES.

Sister, you're welcome home again.
Fran. Thanks, sweet sister.
Isa. You've had good speed.
Fran. What says she? [*Aside.*]—I have made
All the best speed I could.
Isa. I well believe you.—
Sir, we're all much beholding to your kindness.
Aber. My service ever, madam, to a gentlewoman.
I took a bonny mare I keep, and met her
Some ten mile out of town,—eleven, I think.—
'Twas at the stump I met you, I remember,
At bottom of the hill.
Fran. 'Twas thereabout, sir.
Aber. Full eleven then, by the rod, if they were measur'd.
Isa. You look ill, methinks: have you been sick of late?—
Troth, very bleak, doth she not? how think you, sir?

Aber. No, no; a little sharp with riding; sh'as rid sore.
Fran. I ever look lean after a journey, sister;
One shall do that has travell'd, travell'd hard.
Aber. Till evening I commend you to yourselves, ladies. [*Exit.*
Isa. And that's best trusting to, if you were hanged.— [*Aside.*
You're well acquainted with his hand went out now?
Fran. His hand?
Isa. I speak of nothing else; I think 'tis there. [*Giving letter.*
Please you to look upon't; and when you've done,
If you did weep, it could not be amiss,
A sign you could say grace after a full meal.
You had not need look paler, yet you do.
'Twas ill done to abuse yourself and us,
To wrong so good a brother, and the thoughts
That we both held of you. I did doubt you much
Before our marriage; but then my strangeness[1]
And better hope still kept me off from speaking.
Yet may you find a kind and peaceful sister of me,
If you desist here, and shake hands with folly,
Which you ha' more cause to do than I to wish you.
As truly as I bear a love to goodness,
Your brother knows not yet on't, nor shall ever
For my part, so you leave his company.
But if I find you impudent in sinning,
I will not keep't an hour, nay, prove your enemy,

[1] Coyness.

And you know who will aid me. As you've goodness,
You may make use of this; I'll leave it with you.
[*Exit.*

Fran. Here's a sweet churching after a woman's labour,
And a fine Give you joy! why, where the devil
Lay you to be found out? the sudden hurry
Of hastening to prevent shame brought shame forth:
That's still the curse of all lascivious stuff;
Misdeeds could never yet be wary enough.
Now must I stand in fear of every look,
Nay, tremble at a whisper. She can keep it secret?
That's very likely, and a woman too!
I'm sure I could not do't; and I am made
As well as she can be for any purpose:
'Twould ne'er stay with me two days—I have cast[1] it—
The third would be a terrible sick day with me,
Not possible to bear it: should I then
Trust to her strength in't, that lies every night
Whispering the day's news in a husband's ear?
No; and I've thought upon the means: blest fortune!
I must be quit with her in the same fashion,
Or else 'tis nothing: there is no way like it,
To bring her honesty into question cunningly.
My brother will believe small likelihoods,
Coming from me too. I lying now i' th' house
May work things to my will, beyond conceit too:
Disgrace her first, her tale will ne'er be heard;

[1] "Cast" = (1) devise, (2) vomit.

I learn'd that counsel first of a sound guard.
I do suspect Gaspar, my brother's squire there,
Had some hand in this mischief, for he's cunning;
And I perhaps may fit him.

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. Your sister told me you were come; thou'rt welcome.
Fran. Where is she?
Ant. Who, my wife?
Fran. Ay, sir.
Ant. Within.
Fran. Not within hearing, think you?
Ant. Within hearing?
What's thy conceit in that? why shak'st thy head so,
And look'st so pale and poorly?
Fran. I'm a fool indeed
To take such grief for others; for your fortune, sir.
Ant. My fortune? worse things yet? farewell life then!
Fran. I fear you're much deceiv'd, sir, in this woman.
Ant. Who? in my wife? speak low; come hither; softly, sister.
Fran. I love her as a woman you made choice of;
But when she wrongs you, natural love is touch'd, brother,
And that will speak, you know.
Ant. I trust it will.
Fran. I held a shrewd suspicion of her lightness
At first, when I went down, which made me haste the sooner;

But more, to make amends, at my return now,
I found apparent signs.
Ant. Apparent, sayst thou?
Fran. Ay, and of base lust too: that makes th' affliction.
Ant. There has been villany wrought upon me then;
'Tis too plain now.
Fran. Happy are they, I say still,
That have their sisters living i' th' house with 'em,
Their mothers, or some kindred; a great comfort
To all poor married men; it is not possible
A young wife can abuse a husband then;
'Tis found straight. But swear service to this, brother.
Ant. To this, and all thou wilt have.
Fran. Then this follows, sir. [*Whispers him.*
Ant. I praise thy counsel well; I'll put't in use straight.
See where she comes herself. [*Exit* FRANCISCA.

Re-enter ISABELLA.

Kind, honest lady,
I must now borrow a whole fortnight's leave of thee.
Isa. How, sir, a fortnight's?
Ant. It may be but ten days, I know not yet;
'Tis business for the state, and 't must be done.
Isa. I wish good speed to't then.
Ant. Why, that was well spoke.
I'll take but a foot-boy; I need no more;
The rest I'll leave at home to do you service.

Isa. Use your own pleasure, sir.
Ant. Till my return
You'll be good company, my sister and you.
Isa. We shall make shift, sir.
Ant. I'm glad now she's come;
And so the wishes of my love to both!
Isa. And our good prayers with you, sir!
[*Exit* ANTONIO.

Re-enter SEBASTIAN.

Seb. Now, my fortune!— [*Aside.*
By your kind favour, madam.
Isa. With me, sir?
Seb. The words shall not be many, but the faithfulness
And true respect that is included in 'em
Is worthy your attention, and may put upon me
The fair repute of a just, honest servant.
Isa. What's here to do, sir,
There's such great preparation toward?
Seb. In brief, that goodness in you is abus'd, madam;
You have the married life, but 'tis a strumpet
That has the joy on't and the fruitfulness;
There goes away your comfort.
Isa. How? a strumpet?
Seb. Of five years' cost and upwards, a dear mischief,
As they are all of 'em; his fortnight's journey
Is to that country: if it be not rudeness
To speak the truth, I've found it all out, madam.
Isa. Thou'st found out thine own ruin; for to my knowledge

Thou dost belie him basely: I dare swear
He's a gentleman as free from that folly
As ever took religious life upon him.
Seb. Be not too confident to your own abuse, madam.
Since I've begun the truth, neither your frowns—
The only curses that I have on earth,
Because my means depends upon your service—
Nor all the execration of man's fury,
Shall put me off: though I be poor, I'm honest,
And too just in this business. I perceive now
Too much respect and faithfulness to ladies
May be a wrong to servants.
Isa. Art thou yet
So impudent to stand in't?
Seb. Are you yet so cold, madam,
In the belief on't? there my wonder's fix'd;
Having such blessed health and youth about you,
Which makes the injury mighty.
Isa. Why, I tell thee,
It were too great a fortune for thy lowness
To find out such a thing; thou dost not look
As if thou'rt made for't. By the sweets of love,
I would give half my wealth for such a bargain,
And think 'twere bought too cheap: thou canst not guess
Thy means and happiness, should I find this true.
First, I'd prefer thee to the lord my uncle;
He's governor of Ravenna, all th' advancements
I' th' kingdom flows from him: what need I boast that
Which common fame can teach thee?
Seb. Then thus, madam:

Since I presume now on your height of spirit,
And your regard to your own youth and fruitfulness,
Which every woman naturally loves and covets,
Accept but of my labour in directions,
You shall both find your wrongs, which you may right
At your own pleasure, yet not miss'd to-night
Here in the house neither; none shall take notice
Of any absence in you, as I've thought on't.

Isa. Do this, and take my praise and thanks for ever.

Seb. As I deserve, I wish 'em, and will serve you.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Field.

Enter HECATE, STADLIN, HOPPO, *and other Witches;* FIRESTONE *in the background.*

Hec. The moon's a galiant; see how brisk she rides!

Stad. Here's a rich evening, Hecate.

Hec. Ay, is't not, wenches,
To take a journey of five thousand mile?

Hop. Ours will be more to-night.

Hec. O 'twill be precious!
Heard you the owl yet?

Stad. Briefly in the copse,
As we came through now.

Hec. 'Tis high time for us then.

Stad. There was a bat hung at my lips three times
As we came through the woods, and drank her fill:
Old Puckle saw her.

Hec. You are fortunate still;
The very screech-owl lights upon your shoulder
And woos you, like a pigeon. Are you furnish'd?
Have you your ointments?
Stad. All.
Hec. Prepare to flight then;
I'll overtake you swiftly.
Stad. Hie thee, Hecate;
We shall be up betimes.
Hec. I'll reach you quickly.
[*Exeunt all the Witches except* HECATE.
Fire. They are all going a-birding to-night: they talk of fowls i' th' air that fly by day; I am sure they'll be a company of foul sluts there to-night: if we have not mortality after't, I'll be hanged, for they are able to putrefy it, to infect a whole region. She spies me now.
Hec. What, Firestone, our sweet son?
Fire. A little sweeter than some of you, or a dunghill were too good for me. [*Aside.*
Hec. How much hast here?
Fire. Nineteen, and all brave plump ones,
Besides six lizards and three serpentine eggs.
Hec. Dear and sweet boy! what herbs hast thou?
Fire. I have some marmartin and mandragon.
Hec. Marmaritin and mandragora, thou wouldst say.
Fire. Here's panax too—I thank thee—my pan aches, I'm sure,
With kneeling down to cut 'em.
Hec. And selago,

Hedge-hyssop too: how near he goes my cuttings!
Were they all cropt by moonlight?

Fire. Every blade of 'em,
Or I'm a moon-calf, mother.

Hec. Hie thee home with 'em:
Look well to the house to-night; I'm for aloft.

Fire. Aloft, quoth you? I would you would break your neck once, that I might have all quickly! [*Aside.*] —Hark, hark, mother! they are above the steeple already, flying over your head with a noise[1] of musicians.

Hec. They're they indeed. Help, help me; I'm too late else.

Song above.[2]

Come away, come away,
Hecate, Hecate, come away!

Hec. I come, I come, I come, I come,
With all the speed I may,
With all the speed I may.
Where's Stadlin?

[*Voice above.*] Here.

Hec. Where's Puckle?

[*Voice above.*] Here;
And Hoppo too, and Hellwain too;
We lack but you, we lack but you;
Come away, make up the count.

Hec. I will but 'noint, and then I mount.
[*A Spirit like a cat descends.*

[1] Company. [2] See remarks in the *Introduction*, pp. lv.–lviii.

[*Voice above.*] There's one comes down to fetch his dues,
A kiss, a coll,[1] a sip of blood;
And why thou stay'st so long
I muse, I muse,
Since the air's so sweet and good.

Hec. O, art thou come?
What news, what news?

Spirit. All goes still to our delight:
Either come, or else
Refuse, refuse.

Hec. Now I'm furnished for the flight.

Fire. Hark, hark, the cat sings a brave treble in her own language!

Hec. [*going up.*] Now I go, now I fly,
Malkin my sweet spirit and I.
O what a dainty pleasure 'tis
To ride in the air
When the moon shines fair,
And sing and dance, and toy and kiss
Over woods, high rocks, and mountains,
Over[2] seas, our mistress' fountains,
Over steep[3] towers and turrets,
We fly by night, 'mongst troops of spirits:
No ring of bells to our ears sounds,

[1] Embrace.

[2] In Davenant's alteration of *Macbeth* the reading is—"Over hills and misty fountains."

[3] Davenant gives—"Over *steeples*, towers, and turrets," which is probably what Middleton wrote. Cf. p. 367, "In moonlight nights, on steeple-tops."

No howls of wolves, no yelps of hounds;
No, not the noise of water's breach,
Or cannon's throat our height can reach.

[*Voices above.*] No ring of bells, *&c.*

Fire. Well, mother, I thank your kindness: you must be gambolling i' th' air, and leave me to walk here like a fool and a mortal. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Duke's House.

Enter ALMACHILDES.

Alm. Though the fates have endued me with a pretty kind of lightness, that I can laugh at the world in a corner on't, and can make myself merry on fasting nights to rub out a supper (which were a precious quality in a young formal student), yet let the world know there is some difference betwixt my jovial condition and the lunary state of madness. I am not quite out of my wits: I know a bawd from an aqua-vitæ shop, a strumpet from wildfire, and a beadle from brimstone. Now shall I try the honesty of a great woman soundly. She reckoning the duke's made away, I'll be hanged if I be not the next now. If I trust her, as she's a woman, let one of her long hairs wind about my heart, and be the end of me; which were a piteous lamentable tragedy, and might be entituled *A fair warning for all hair-bracelets.*

Already there's an insurrection
Among the people; they are up in arms
Not out of any reason, but their wills,
Which are in them their saints, sweating and swearing,
Out of their zeal to rudeness, that no stranger,
As they term her, shall govern over them;
They say they'll raise a duke among themselves first.

Enter Duchess.

Duch. O Almachildes, I perceive already
Our loves are born to curses! we're beset
By multitudes; and, which is worse, I fear me
Unfriended too of any: my chief care
Is for thy sweet youth's safety.
Alm. He that believes you not
Goes the right way to heaven, o' my conscience. [*Aside.*
Duch. There is no trusting of 'em; they're all as barren
In pity as in faith: he that puts confidence
In them, dies openly to the sight of all men,
Not with his friends and neighbours in peace private;
But as his shame, so his cold farewell is,
Public and full of noise. But keep you close, sir,
Not seen of any, till I see the way
Plain for your safety. I expect the coming
Of the lord governor, whom I will flatter
With fair entreaties, to appease their wildness;
And before him take a great grief upon me
For the duke's death, his strange and sudden loss;
And when a quiet comes, expect thy joys.

Alm. I do expect now to be made away
'Twixt this and Tuesday night: if I live Wednesday,
Say I have been careful, and shunn'd spoon-meat.
[*Aside and exit.*

Duch. This fellow lives too long after the deed;
I'm weary of his sight; he must die quickly,
Or I've small hope of safety. My great aim's
At the lord governor's love; he is a spirit
Can sway and countenance; these obey and crouch.
My guiltiness had need of such a master,
That with a beck can suppress multitudes,
And dim misdeeds with radiance of his glory,
Not to be seen with dazzled popular eyes:
And here behold him come.

Enter Lord Governor, *attended by* Gentlemen.

Gov. Return back to 'em,
Say we desire 'em to be friends of peace
Till they hear farther from us. [*Exeunt* Gentlemen.

Duch. O my lord,
I fly unto the pity of your nobleness,
The grieved'st lady that was e'er beset
With storms of sorrows, or wild rage of people!
Never was woman's grief for loss of lord
Dearer[1] than mine to me.

Gov. There's no right done
To him now, madam, by wrong done to yourself;
Your own good wisdom may instruct you so far:
And for the people's tumult, which oft grows

[1] More intense, more grievous.

From liberty, or rankness of long peace,
I'll labour to restrain, as I've begun, madam.
Duch. My thanks and praises shall ne'er forget you, sir,
And, in time to come, my love.
Gov. Your love, sweet madam?
You make my joys too happy; I did covet
To be the fortunate man that blessing visits,
Which I'll esteem the crown and full reward
Of service present and deserts to come:
It is a happiness I'll be bold to sue for,
When I have set a calm upon these spirits
That now are up for ruin.
Duch. Sir, my wishes
Are so well met in yours, so fairly answer'd,
And nobly recompens'd, it makes me suffer
In those extremes that few have ever felt;
To hold two passions in one heart at once,
Of gladness and of sorrow.
Gov. Then, as the olive
Is the meek ensign of fair fruitful peace,
So is this kiss of yours.
Duch. Love's power be with you, sir!
Gov. How sh'as betray'd her! may I breathe no longer
Than to do virtue service, and bring forth
The fruits of noble thoughts, honest and loyal!
This will be worth th' observing; and I'll do't.
[*Aside and exit.*
Duch. What a sure happiness confirms joy to me,
Now in the times of my most imminent dangers!
I look'd for ruin, and increase of honour

Meets me auspiciously. But my hopes are clogg'd now
With an unworthy weight; there's the misfortune!
What course shall I take now with this young man?
For he must be no hinderance: I have thought on't;
I'll take some witch's counsel for his end,
That will be sur'st: mischief is mischief's friend.
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment in FERNANDO'S *House.*

Enter SEBASTIAN *and* FERNANDO.

Seb. If ever you knew force of love in life, sir,
Give to mine pity.
Fer. You do ill to doubt me.
Seb. I could make bold with no friend seemlier
Than with yourself, because you were in presence
At our vow-making.
Fer. I'm a witness to't.
Seb. Then you best understand, of all men living,
This is no wrong I offer, no abuse
Either to faith or friendship, for we're register'd
Husband and wife in heaven; though there wants that
Which often keeps licentious men[1] in awe
From starting from their wedlocks, the knot public,
'Tis in our souls knit fast; and how more precious
The soul is than the body, so much judge

[1] MS. "man."

The sacred and celestial tie within us
More than the outward form, which calls but witness
Here upon earth to what is done in heaven:
Though I must needs confess the least is honourable;
As an ambassador sent from a king
Has honour by th' employment, yet there's greater
Dwells in the king that sent him; so in this.

Enter FLORIDA.

Fer. I approve all you speak, and will appear to you
A faithful, pitying friend.
Seb. Look, there is she, sir,
One good for nothing but to make use of;
And I'm constrain'd t' employ her to make all things
Plain, easy, and probable; for when she comes
And finds one here that claims him, as I've taught
Both this to do't, and he to compound with her,
'Twill stir belief the more of such a business.
Fer. I praise the carriage well.
Seb. Hark you, sweet mistress,
I shall do you a simple turn in this;
For she disgrac'd thus, you are up in favour
For ever with her husband.
Flo. That's my hope, sir,
I would not take the pains else. Have you the keys
Of the garden-side, that I may get betimes in
Closely, and take her lodging?
Seb. Yes, I've thought upon you:
Here be the keys. [*Giving keys.*

Flo. Marry, and thanks, sweet sir:
Set me to work so still.
Seb. Your joys are false ones,
You're like to lie alone; you'll be deceiv'd
Of the bed-fellow you look for, else my purpose
Were in an ill case: he's on his fortnight's journey;
You'll find cold comfort there; a dream will be
Even the best market you can make to-night. [*Aside.*
She'll not be long now: you may lose no time neither;
If she but take you at the door, 'tis enough:
When a suspect doth catch once, it burns mainly.
There may you end your business, and as cunningly
As if you were i' th' chamber, if you please
To use but the same art.
Flo. What need you urge that
Which comes so naturally I cannot miss on't?
What makes the devil so greedy of a soul,
But 'cause has lost his own, to all joys lost?
So 'tis our trade to set snares for other women,
'Cause we were once caught ourselves. [*Exit.*
Seb. A sweet allusion!
Hell and a whore it seems are partners then
In one ambition: yet thou'rt here deceiv'd now;
Thou canst set none to hurt or wrong her honour,
It rather makes it perfect. Best of friends
That ever love's extremities were bless'd with,
I feel mine arms with thee, and call my peace
The offspring of thy friendship. I will think
This night my wedding-night; and with a joy
As reverend as religion can make man's,

I will embrace this blessing. Honest actions
Are laws unto themselves, and that good fear
Which is on others forc'd, grows kindly there.
[*Knocking within.*
Fer. Hark, hark! one knocks: away, sir; 'tis she certainly: [*Exit* SEBASTIAN.
It sounds much like a woman's jealous 'larum.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. By your leave, sir.
Fer. You're welcome, gentlewoman.
Isa. Our ladyship then stands us in no stead now.
[*Aside.*
One word in private, sir. [*Whispers him.*
Fer. No, surely, forsooth,
There is no such here, you've mistook the house.
Isa. O sir, that have I not; excuse me there,
I come not with such ignorance; think not so, sir.
'Twas told me at the entering of your house here
By one that knows him too well.
Fer. Who should that be?
Isa. Nay, sir, betraying is not my profession:
But here I know he is; and I presume
He would give me admittance, if he knew on't,
As one on 's nearest friends.
Fer. You're not his wife, forsooth?
Isa. Yes, by my faith, am I
Fer. Cry you mercy then, lady.
Isa. She goes here by the name on's wife: good stuff!
But the bold strumpet never told me that. [*Aside.*

Fer. We are so oft deceiv'd that let out lodgings,
We know not whom to trust: 'tis such a world,
There are so many odd tricks now-a-days
Put upon housekeepers.
Isa. Why, do you think I'd wrong
You or the reputation of your house?
Pray, show me the way to him.
Fer. He's asleep, lady,
The curtains drawn about him.
Isa. Well, well, sir,
I'll have that care I'll not disease[1] him much,
Tread you but lightly.—O, of what gross falsehood
Is man's heart made of! had my first love liv'd
And return'd safe, he would have been a light
To all men's actions, his faith shin'd so bright.
[*Aside, and exit with* FERNANDO.

Re-enter SEBASTIAN.

Seb. I cannot so deceive her, 'twere too sinful,
There's more religion in my love than so.
It is not treacherous lust that gives content
T' an honest mind; and this could prove no better.
Were it in me a part of manly justice,
That have sought strange hard means to keep her chaste
To her first vow, and I t' abuse her first?
Better I never knew what comfort were
In woman's love than wickedly to know it.
What could the falsehood of one night avail him

[1] Disturb.

That must enjoy for ever, or he's lost?
'Tis the way rather to draw hate upon me;
For, known, 'tis as impossible she should love me,
As youth in health to doat upon a grief,
Or one that's robb'd and bound t' affect the thief:
No, he that would soul's sacred comfort win
Must burn in pure love, like a seraphin.

Re-enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Celio!
Seb. Sweet madam?
Isa. Thou hast deluded me;
There's nobody.
Seb. How? I wonder he would miss, madam,
Having appointed too: 'twere a strange goodness
If heaven should turn his heart now by the way.
Isa. O, never, Celio!
Seb. Yes, I ha' known the like:
Man is not at his own disposing, madam;
The bless'd powers have provided better for him,
Or he were miserable. He may come yet;
'Tis early, madam: if you would be pleas'd
T' embrace my counsel, you should see this night over,
Since you've bestow'd this pains.
Isa. I intend so.
Seb. That strumpet would be found, else she should go.
I curse the time now I did e'er make use
Of such a plague: sin knows not what it does. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Hall in ANTONIO'S *House.*

Enter FRANCISCA.

Fran. 'Tis now my brother's time, even much about it;
For though he dissembled a whole fortnight's absence,
He comes again to-night; 'twas so agreed
Before he went. I must bestir my wits now,
To catch this sister of mine, and bring her name
To some disgrace first, to preserve mine own:
There's profit in that cunning. She cast off
My company betimes to-night by tricks and slights,
And I was well contented. I'm resolv'd
There's no hate lost between us; for I know
She does not love me now, but painfully,
Like one that's forc'd to smile upon a grief,
To bring some purpose forward; and I'll pay her
In her own metal. They're now all at rest,
And Gaspar there, and all: list! fast asleep;
He cries[1] it hither: I must disease you straight, sir.
For the maid-servants and the girls o' th' house,
I spic'd them lately with a drowsy posset,[2]
They will not hear in haste. [*Noise within.*] My
brother's come:

[1] Snores.
[2] Cf. *Macbeth*, ii. 2:—
"The surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores; I have drugged their possets."

O, where's this key now for him? here 'tis, happily:
But I must wake him first.—Why, Gaspar, Gaspar!
Gas. [*within.*] What a pox gasp you for?
Fran. Now I'll throw't down.
Gas. [*within.*] Who's that call'd me now? somebody call'd Gaspar?
Fran. O, up, as thou'rt an honest fellow, Gaspar!
Gas. [*within.*] I shall not rise to-night then. What's the matter?
Who's that? young mistress?
Fran. Ay; up, up, sweet Gaspar!

Enter GASPARO.

My sister hath both knock'd and call'd this hour,
And not a maid will stir.
Gas. They'll stir enough sometimes.
Fran. Hark, hark, again! Gaspar, O, run, run, prithee!
Gas. Give me leave to clothe myself.
Fran. Stand'st upon clothing
In an extremity? Hark, hark again!
She may be dead ere thou com'st: O, in quickly!—
[*Exit* GASPARO.
He's gone: he cannot choose but be took now,
Or met in his return; that will be enough.—

Enter ANTONIO.

Brother? here, take this light.
Ant. My careful sister!
Fran. Look first in his own lodging ere you enter.
[*Exit* ANTONIO.

Ant. [*within.*] O abus'd confidence! there's nothing of him
But what betrays him more.
Fran. Then 'tis too true, brother?
Ant. [*within.*] I'll make base lust a terrible example;
No villany e'er paid dearer.
Flo.[1] [*within.*] Help! hold, sir!
Ant. [*within.*] I'm deaf to all humanity.
Fran. List, list!
A strange and sudden silence after all:
I trust has spoil'd 'em both; too dear a happiness!
O how I tremble between doubts and joys!
Ant. [*within.*] There perish both, down to the house of falsehood,
Where perjurous wedlock weeps!
[*Re-entering with his sword drawn.*
O perjurous woman!
Sh'ad took the innocence of sleep upon her
At my approach, and would not see me come;
As if sh'ad lain there like a harmless soul,
And never dream'd of mischief. What's all this now?
I feel no ease; the burden's not yet off
So long as the abuse sticks in my knowledge.
O, 'tis a pain of hell to know one's shame!
Had it been hid and done, 't had been done happy,
For he that's ignorant lives long and merry.
Fran. I shall know all now. [*Aside.*]—Brother!

[1] MS. "Fra."

Ant. Come down quickly,
For I must kill thee too.
Fran. Me?
Ant. Stay not long:
If thou desir'st to die with little pain,
Make haste I'd wish thee, and come willingly;
If I be forc'd to come, I shall be cruel
Above a man to thee.
Fran. Why, sir!—my brother!——
Ant. Talk to thy soul, if thou wilt talk at all;
To me thou'rt lost for ever.
Fran. This is fearful in you:
Beyond all reason, brother, would you thus
Reward me for my care and truth shown to you?
Ant. A curse upon 'em both, and thee for company!
'Tis that too diligent, thankless care of thine
Makes me a murderer, and that ruinous[1] truth
That lights me to the knowledge of my shame.
Hadst thou been secret, then had I been happy,
And had a hope, like man, of joys to come:
Now here I stand a stain to my creation;
And, which is heavier than all torments to me,
The understanding of this base adultery;
And that thou toldst me first, which thou deserv'st
Death worthily for.
Fran. If that be the worst, hold, sir,
Hold, brother; I can ease your knowledge straight,
By my soul's hopes, I can! there's no such thing.
Ant. How?

[1] MS. "ruynes."

Fran. Bless me but with life, I'll tell you all:
Your bed was never wrong'd.
Ant. What? never wrong'd?
Fran. I ask but mercy as I deal with truth now:
'Twas only my deceit, my plot, and cunning,
To bring disgrace upon her; by that means
To keep mine own hid, which none knew but she:
To speak troth, I had a child by Aberzanes, sir.
Ant. How? Aberzanes?
Fran. And my mother's letter
Was counterfeited, to get time and place
For my delivery.
Ant. O, my wrath's redoubled!
Fran. At my return she could speak all my folly,
And blam'd me, with good counsel. I, for fear
It should be made known, thus rewarded her;
Wrought you into suspicion without cause,
And at your coming rais'd up Gaspar suddenly,
Sent him but in before you, by a falsehood,
Which to your kindled jealousy I knew
Would add enough: what's now confess'd is true.
Ant. The more I hear, the worse it fares with me.
I ha' kill'd 'em now for nothing; yet the shame
Follows my blood still. Once more, come down:
Look you, my sword goes up. [*Sheathing sword.*
Call Hermio to me:
Let the new man alone; he'll wake too soon
[*Exit* FRANCISCA *above.*
To find his mistress dead, and lose a service.
Already the day breaks upon my guilt;

Enter HERMIO.

I must be brief and sudden.—Hermio.
Her. Sir?
Ant. Run, knock up Aberzanes speedily;
Say I desire his company this morning
To yonder horse-race, tell him; that will fetch him:
O, hark you, by the way—— [*Whispers.*
Her. Yes, sir.
Ant. Use speed now,
Or I will ne'er use thee more; and, perhaps,
I speak in a right hour. My grief o'erflows;
I must in private go and vent my woes. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A Hall in ANTONIO'S *House.*

Enter ANTONIO [1] *and* ABERZANES.

Ant.[2] You're welcome, sir.

Aber. I think I'm worthy on't,
For, look you, sir, I come untruss'd,[3] in troth.

Ant.[2] The more's the pity—honester men go to't—
That slaves should 'scape it. What blade have you got there?

Aber. Nay, I know not that, sir: I am not acquainted greatly with the blade; I am sure 'tis a good scabbard, and that satisfies me.

Ant. 'Tis long enough indeed, if that be good.

Aber. I love to wear a long weapon; 'tis a thing commendable.

Ant. I pray, draw it, sir.

Aber. It is not to be drawn.

---

[1] MS. "Sebastian."
[2] MS. "*Seb.*"
[3] With the breeches' tags untied.

Ant. Not to be drawn?

Aber. I do not care to see't: to tell you troth, sir, 'tis only a holyday thing, to wear by a man's side.

Ant. Draw it, or I'll rip thee down from neck to navel,
Though there's small glory in't.

Aber. Are you in earnest, sir?

Ant. I'll tell thee that anon.

Aber. Why, what's the matter, sir?

Ant. What a base misery is this in life now!
This slave had so much daring courage in him
To act a sin would shame whole generations,
But hath not so much honest strength about him
To draw a sword in way of satisfaction.
This shows thy great guilt, that thou dar'st not fight.

Aber. Yes, I dare fight, sir, in an honest cause.

Ant. Why, come then, slave! thou'st made my sister a whore.

Aber. Prove that an honest cause, and I'll be hang'd.

Ant. So many starting holes? can I light no way?
Go to, you shall have your wish, all honest play.—
Come forth, thou fruitful wickedness, thou seed
Of shame and murder! take to thee in wedlock
Baseness and cowardice, a fit match for thee!—
Come, sir, along with me.

Enter FRANCISCA.

Aber. 'Las, what to do?
I am too young to take a wife, in troth.

Ant. But old enough to take a strumpet though:

You'd fain get all your children beforehand,
And marry when you've done; that's a strange course, sir.
This woman I bestow on thee: what dost thou say?
Aber. I would I had such another to bestow on you, sir?
Ant. Uncharitable slave! dog, coward as thou art,
To wish a plague so great as thine to any!
Aber. To my friend, sir, where I think I may be bold.
Ant. Down, and do't solemnly; contract yourselves
With truth and zeal, or ne'er rise up again.
I will not have her die i' th' state of strumpet,
Though she took pride to live one.—Hermio, the wine!

Enter HERMIO *with wine.*

Her. 'Tis here, sir.—Troth, I wonder at some things;
But I'll keep honest. [*Aside.*
Ant. So, here's to you both now, [*They drink.*
And to your joys, if't be your luck to find 'em:
I tell you, you must weep hard, if you do.
Divide it 'twixt you both; you shall not need
A strong bill of divorcement after that,
If you mislike your bargain. Go, get in now;
Kneel and pray heartily to get forgiveness
Of those two souls whose bodies thou hast murder'd.—
[*Exeunt* ABERZANES *and* FRANCISCA.
Spread, subtle poison! Now my shame in her
Will die when I die; there's some comfort yet.
I do but think how each man's punishment

Proves still a kind of justice to himself.
I was the man that told this innocent gentlewoman,
Whom I did falsely wed and falsely kill,
That he that was her husband first by contract
Was slain i' th' field; and he's known yet to live:
So did I cruelly beguile his heart,
For which I'm well rewarded; so is Gaspar,
Who, to befriend my love, swore fearful oaths
He saw the last breath fly from him. I see now
'Tis a thing dreadful t' abuse holy vows,
And falls most weight[il]y.
Her. Take comfort, sir;
You're guilty of no death; they're only hurt,
And that not mortally.

Enter GASPARO.

Ant. Thou breath'st untruths.
Her. Speak, Gaspar, for me then.
Gas. Your unjust rage, sir,
Has hurt me without cause.
Ant. 'Tis changed to grief for't.
How fares my wife?
Gas. No doubt, sir, she fares well,
For she ne'er felt your fury. The poor sinner
That hath this seven year kept herself sound for you,
'Tis your luck to bring her into th' surgeon's hands now.
Ant. Florida?
Gas. She: I know no other, sir;
You were ne'er at charge yet but with one light-horse.

Ant. Why, where's your lady? where's my wife to-night then?

Gas. Nay, ask not me, sir; your struck doe within
Tells a strange tale of her.

Ant. This is unsufferable!
Never had man such means to make him mad.
O that the poison would but spare my life
Till I had found her out!

Her. Your wish is granted, sir:
Upon the faithfulness of a pitying servant,
I gave you none at all; my heart was kinder.
Let not conceit abuse you; you're as healthful,
For any drug, as life yet ever found you.

Ant. Why, here's a happiness wipes off mighty sorrows:
The benefit of ever-pleasing service
Bless thy profession!—

Enter Lord Governor, *attended by* Gentlemen.

O my worthy lord,
I've an ill bargain, never man had worse!
The woman that, unworthy, wears your blood
To countenance sin in her, your niece, she's false.

Gov. False?

Ant. Impudent, adulterous.

Gov. You're too loud,
And grow too bold too with her virtuous meekness.

Enter FLORIDA.

Who dare accuse her?

Flo. Here's one dare and can.

She lies this night with Celio, her own servant;
The place, Fernando's house.
Gov. Thou dost amaze us.
Ant. Why, here's but lust translated from one baseness
Into another: here I thought t' have caught 'em,
But lighted wrong, by false intelligence,
And made me hurt the innocent. But now
I'll make my revenge dreadfuller than a tempest;
An army should not stop me, or a sea
Divide 'em from my revenge. [*Exit.*
Gov. I'll not speak
To have her spar'd, if she be base and guilty:
If otherwise, heaven will not see her wrong'd,
I need not take care for her. Let that woman
Be carefully look'd to, both for health and sureness.—
It is not that mistaken wound thou wear'st
Shall be thy privilege.
Flo. You cannot torture me
Worse than the surgeon does: so long I care not.
[*Exit with* GASPARO *and a* Gentleman.
[*Gov.*] If she be adulterous, I will never trust
Virtues in women; they're but veils for lust.
[*Exit with* Gentlemen.
Her. To what a lasting ruin mischief runs!
I had thought I'd well and happily ended all,
In keeping back the poison; and new rage now
Spreads a worse venom. My poor lady grieves me:
'Tis strange to me that her sweet-seeming virtues
Should be so meanly overtook with Celio,
A servant: 'tis not possible.

Enter ISABELLA *and* SEBASTIAN.

Isa. Good morrow, Hermio:
My sister stirring yet?
Her. How? stirring, forsooth!
Here has been simple stirring. Are you not hurt, madam?
Pray, speak; we have a surgeon ready.
Isa. How? a surgeon!
Her. Hath been at work these five hours.
Isa. How he talks!
Her. Did you not meet my master?
Isa. How, your master?
Why, came he home to-night?
Her. Then know you nothing, madam? 129
Please you but walk in, you shall hear strange business.
Isa. I'm much beholding to your truth now, am I not?
You've serv'd me fair; my credit's stain'd for ever!
[*Exit with* HERMIO.
Seb. This is the wicked'st fortune that e'er blew:
We're both undone, for nothing: there's no way
Flatters recovery now, the thing's so gross:
Her disgrace grieves me more than a life's loss. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Abode of HECATE: *a caldron in the centre.*

Enter Duchess, HECATE, *and* FIRESTONE.

Hec. What death is't you desire for Almachildes?
Duch. A sudden and a subtle.

Hec. Then I've fitted you.
Here lie the gifts of both; sudden and subtle:
His picture made in wax, and gently molten
By a blue fire kindled with dead men's eyes,
Will waste him by degrees.
Duch. In what time, prithee?
Hec. Perhaps in a moon's progress.
Duch. What, a month?
Out upon pictures, if they be so tedious!
Give me things with some life.
Hec. Then seek no farther.
Duch. This must be done with speed, despatch'd this night,
If it may possible.
Hec. I have it for you;
Here's that will do't: stay but perfection's time,
And that's not five hours hence.
Duch. Canst thou do this?
Hec. Can I!
Duch. I mean, so closely.
Hec. So closely
Do you mean too!
Duch. So artfully, so cunningly.
Hec. Worse and worse; doubts and incredulities!
They make me mad. Let scrupulous creatures know
Cum[1] *volui, ripis ipsis mirantibus, amnes*

[1] "Ovid, *Met.* vii. 199, where the first line is

'Quorum ope, *cum volui, ripis mirantibus amnes:*'

but I find it quoted, as in our text, by Corn. Agrippa, *Occult. Philos.*, lib. i. cap. lxxii. p. 113, *Opp.* t. i. ed. Lugd.; by R. Scot, *Discouerie of*

In fontes rediere suos; concussaque sisto,
Stantia concutio cantu freta; nubila pello,
Nubilaque induco; ventos abigoque vocoque;
Vipereas rumpo verbis et carmine fauces;
Et silvas moveo; jubeoque tremiscere montes,
Et mugire solum, manesque exire sepulchris.
Te [*quo*] *que, luna, traho.* Can you doubt me then, daughter,
That can make mountains tremble, miles of woods walk,
Whole earth's foundations bellow, and the spirits
Of the entomb'd to burst out from their marbles,
Nay, draw yond moon to my involv'd designs?

Fire. I know as well as can be when my mother's mad, and our great cat angry, for one spits French then, and th' other spits Latin. [*Aside.*

Duch. I did not doubt you, mother.

Hec. No! what did you?
My power's so firm, it is not to be question'd.

Duch. Forgive what's past: and now I know th' offensiveness
That vexes art, I'll shun th' occasion ever.

Hec. Leave all to me and my five sisters, daughter:
It shall be convey'd in at howlet-time;
Take you no care: my spirits know their moments;
Raven or screech-owl never fly by th' door

Witchcraft, l. xii. c. vii. p. 225, ed. 1584; and by Bodinus, *De Magorum Dæmonomania*, lib. ii. cap. ii. p. 130, ed. 1590. From the last-mentioned work, indeed, Middleton seems to have transcribed the passage, since he omits, as Bodinus does, a line after '*Vipereas rumpo*,' &c."—*Dyce.*

But they call in—I thank 'em—and they lose not by't;
I give 'em barley soak'd in infants' blood;
They shall have *semina cum sanguine*,
Their gorge cramm'd full, if they come once to our house;
We are no niggard. [*Exit* Duchess.

Fire. They fare but too well when they come hither; they eat up as much t'other night as would have made me a good conscionable pudding.

Hec. Give me some lizard's-brain; quickly, Firestone.

[FIRESTONE *brings the different ingredients for the charm, as* HECATE *calls for them.*

Where's grannam Stadlin, and all the rest o' th' sisters?

Fire. All at hand, forsooth. 51

Enter STADLIN, HOPPO, *and other* Witches.

Hec. Give me marmaritin, some bear-breech: when?[1]

Fire. Here's bear-breech and lizard's-brain, forsooth.

Hec. Into the vessel;
And fetch three ounces of the red-hair'd girl
I kill'd last midnight.

Fire. Whereabouts, sweet mother?

Hec. Hip; hip or flank. Where is the acopus?[2]

Fire. You shall have acopus, forsooth.

Hec. Stir, stir about, whilst I begin the charm.

---

[1] An exclamation of impatience.

[2] Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 27, 4, 13, mentions a plant of this name. It was so called from its soothing qualities (Gr. ἄκοπος).

A Charm-Song about a Vessel.

Black[1] spirits and white, red spirits and gray,
Mingle, mingle, mingle, you that mingle may!
Titty, Tiffin,
Keep it stiff in;
Firedrake, Puckey,
Make it lucky;
Liard, Robin,
You must bob in.
Round, around, around, about, about!
All ill come running in, all good keep out!

First Witch. Here's the blood of a bat.

Hec. Put in that, O, put in that!

Sec. Witch. Here's libbard's-bane.

Hec. Put in again![2]

First Witch. The juice of toad, the oil of adder.

Sec. Witch. Those will make the younker madder.

Hec. Put in—there's all—and rid the stench.

Fire. Nay, here's three ounces of the red-hair'd wench.

All the Witches. Round, around, around, &c.

Hec. So, so, enough: into the vessel with it.
There, 't hath the true perfection. I'm so light
At any mischief! there's no villany
But is a tune, methinks.

Fire. A tune? 'tis to the tune of damnation then I warrant you, and that song hath a villanous burthen. [*Aside.*

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[1] See *Introduction*, pp. lvi.–lviii.

[2] For "again" Davenant gives "a grain."

Hec. Come, my sweet sisters; let the air[1] strike our tune,
Whilst we show reverence to yond peeping moon.
[*They dance the Witches' Dance, and exeunt.*[2]

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[1] Cf. *Macbeth*, iv. 1:—"I'll charm the air to give a sound."

[2] "Though some resemblance may be traced between the charms in Macbeth and the incantations in this play, which is supposed[?] to have preceded it, this coincidence will not detract much from the originality of Shakespeare. His witches are distinguished from the witches of Middleton by essential differences. These are creatures to whom man or woman plotting some dire mischief might resort for occasional consultation. Those originate deeds of blood and begin bad impulses to men. From the moment that their eyes first meet with Macbeth's, he is spell-bound. That meeting sways his destiny. He can never break the fascination. These witches can hurt the body; those have power over the soul. Hecate in Middleton has a son, a low buffoon: the hags of Shakespeare have neither child of their own, nor seem to be descended from any parent. They are foul anomalies, of whom we know not whence they are sprung, nor whether they have beginning or ending. As they are without human passions, so they seem to be without human relations. They come with thunder and lightning, and vanish to airy music. This is all we know of them. Except Hecate, they have no names; which heightens their mysteriousness. The names and some of the properties which Middleton has given to his hags excite smiles. The weird sisters are serious things. Their presence cannot coexist with mirth. But, in a lesser degree, the witches of Middleton are fine creations. Their power too is, in some measure, over the mind. They raise jars, jealousies, strifes, *like a thick scurf o'er life.*"—*Lamb's Spec. of Engl. Dram. Poets.*

SCENE III.

An Apartment in the House of the Lord Governor.

Enter Lord Governor, ISABELLA, FLORIDA, SEBASTIAN, GASPARO, *and* Servants.

Isa. My lord, I've given you nothing but the truth
Of a most plain and innocent intent.
My wrongs being so apparent in this woman—
A creature that robs wedlock of all comfort,
Where'er she fastens—I could do no less
But seek means privately to shame his folly.
No farther reach'd my malice; and it glads me
That none but my base injurer is found
To be my false accuser.
Gov. This is strange,
That he should give the wrongs, yet seek revenge.—
But, sirrah, you; you are accus'd here doubly:
First, by your lady, for a false intelligence
That caus'd her absence, which much hurts her name,
Though her intents were blameless; next, by this woman,
For an adulterous design and plot
Practis'd between you to entrap her honour,
Whilst she, for her hire, should enjoy her husband.
Your answer.
Seb. Part of this is truth, my lord,
To which I'm guilty in a rash intent,

But clear in act; and she most clear in both,
Not sanctity more spotless.

Enter HERMIO.

Her. O my lord!
Gov. What news breaks there?
Her. Of strange destruction:
Here stands the lady that within this hour
Was made a widow.
Gov. How?
Her. Your niece, my lord.
A fearful, unexpected accident
Brought death to meet his fury: for my lord
Entering Fernando's house, like a rais'd tempest,
Which nothing heeds but its own violent rage,
Blinded with wrath and jealousy, which scorn guides,
From a false trap-door fell into a depth
Exceeds a temple's height, which takes into it
Part of the dungeon that falls threescore fathom
Under the castle.
Gov. O you seed of lust,
Wrongs and revenges wrongful, with what terrors
You do present yourselves to wretched man
When his soul least expects you!
Isa. I forgive him
All his wrongs now, and sign it with my pity.
Flo. O my sweet servant! [*Swoons.*
Gov. Look to yond light mistress.
Gas. She's in a swoon, my lord.
Gov. Convey her hence:

It is a sight would grieve a modest eye
To see a strumpet's soul sink into passion[1]
For him that was the husband of another.—
[*Servants remove* FLORIDA.
Yet all this clears not you.
Seb. Thanks to heaven
That I am now of age to clear myself then.
[*Discovers himself.*
Gov. Sebastian!
Seb. The same, much wronged, sir.
Isa. Am I certain
Of what mine eye takes joy to look upon?
Seb. Your service cannot alter me from knowledge;
I am your servant ever.
Gov. Welcome to life, sir.—
Gaspar, thou swor'st his death.
Gas. I did indeed, my lord,
And have been since well paid for't: one forsworn mouth
Hath got me two or three more here.
Seb. I was dead, sir,
Both to my joys and all men's understanding,
Till this my hour of life; for 'twas my fortune
To make the first of my return to Urbin
A witness to that marriage; since which time
I've walk'd beneath myself, and all my comforts
Like one on earth whose joys are laid above:
And though it had been offence small in me
T' enjoy mine own, I left her pure and free.

[1] Passionate sorrow.

Gov. The greater and more sacred is thy blessing;
For where heaven's bounty holy ground-work finds,
'Tis like a sea, encompassing chaste minds.
Her. The duchess comes, my lord.

Enter Duchess *and* AMORETTA.

Gov. Be you then all witnesses
Of an intent most horrid.
Duch. One poor night,
Ever[1] Almachildes now.
Better his meaner fortunes wept than ours,
That took the true height of a princess' spirit
To match unto their greatness. Such lives as his
Were only made to break the force of fate
Ere it came at us, and receive the venom.
'Tis but a usual friendship for a mistress
To lose some forty years' life in hopeful time,
And hazard an eternal soul for ever:
As young as he has done['t], and more desertful. [*Aside.*
Gov. Madam.
Duch. My lord?
Gov. This is the hour that I've so long desir'd;
The tumult's full appeas'd; now may we both
Exchange embraces with a fortunate arm,
And practise to make love-knots, thus.

[*A curtain is drawn, and the* Duke *discovered on a couch, as if dead.*

[1] Some words have dropped out.

Duch. My lord!

Gov. Thus, lustful woman and bold murderess, thus.
Blessed powers,
To make my loyalty and truth so happy!
Look thee, thou shame of greatness, stain of honour,
Behold thy work, and weep before thy death!
If thou be'st blest with sorrow and a conscience,
Which is a gift from heaven, and seldom knocks
At any murderer's breast with sounds of comfort,
See this thy worthy and unequall'd piece;
A fair encouragement for another husband!

Duch. Bestow me upon death, sir; I am guilty,
And of a cruelty above my cause:
His injury was too low for my revenge.
Perform a justice that may light all others
To noble actions: life is hateful to me,
Beholding my dead lord. Make us an one
In death, whom marriage made one of two living,
Till cursed fury parted us: my lord,
I covet to be like him.

Gov. No, my sword
Shall never stain the virgin brightness on't
With blood of an adulteress.

Duch. There, my lord,
I dare my accusers, and defy the world,
Death, shame, and torment: blood I'm guilty of,
But not adultery, not the breach of honour.

Gov. No?—Come forth, Almachildes!

Enter ALMACHILDES.

Duch. Almachildes?
Hath time brought him about to save himself
By my destruction? I am justly doom'd.
Gov. Do you know this woman?
Alm. I've known her better, sir, than at this time.
Gov. But she defies you there.
Alm. That's the common trick of them all.
Duch. Nay, since I'm touch'd so near, before my death then,
In right of honour's innocence, I'm bold
To call heaven and my woman here to witness.
My lord, let her speak truth, or may she perish!
Amo. Then, sir, by all the hopes of a maid's comfort
Either in faithful service or blest marriage,
The woman that his blinded folly knew
Was only a hir'd strumpet, a professor
Of lust and impudence, which here is ready
To approve what I have spoken.
Alm. A common strumpet?
This comes of scarfs: I'll never more wear
An haberdasher's shop before mine eyes again.
Gov. My sword is proud thou'rt lighten'd of that sin:
Die then a murderess only!
Duke. [*rising and embracing her.*] Live a duchess!
Better than ever lov'd, embrac'd, and honour'd.
Duch. My lord!
Duke. Nay, since in honour thou canst justly rise,
Vanish all wrongs, thy former practice dies!—

I thank thee, Almachildes, for my life,
This lord for truth, and heaven for such a wife,
Who, though her intent sinn'd, yet she makes amends
With grief and honour, virtue's noblest ends.—
What griev'd you then shall never more offend you;
Your father's skull with honour we'll inter,
And give the peace due to the sepulchre:
And in all times may this day ever prove
A day of triumph, joy, and honest love! [*Exeunt omnes.*

END OF VOL. V.

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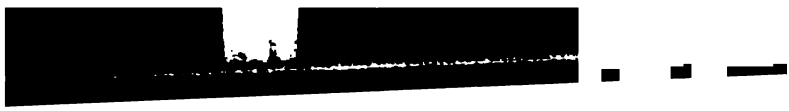

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